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Plea for end to 'gossip column politics'

Cook doing superb job, says Blair

By Roland Watson, political correspondent

TONY BLAIR appealed to voters yesterday to rise above the personal shortcomings of his ministers after Robin Cook's former wife published an intimate and embarrasing account of their failed marriage.

The Prime Minister said that British politics was in danger of being relegated to little more than a gossip column, "an extension of Hollywood", if ministers' private lives remained relentlessly under the microscope.

He gave his Foreign Secretary unqualified support, insisting that Margaret Cook's tales of infidelity, drunkenness and fits of depression did not diminish the "superb job" he was doing for the country.

After three weeks dominated by resignation and the personal rivalries at the top of his government, Mr Blair also tried to paint the episode as a watershed in the relationship between politicians and the public. He said: "We've got to decide what we want the political agenda to be. We can either go through the personal lives of all Cabinet ministers and pick them apart, or we can decide that the Government should be judged on the promises that it made."

His comments came as Mr Cook's friends insisted that it was "business as usual" despite the humiliating detail of Mrs Cook's account of their 28-year marriage, serialised in *The Sunday Times* yesterday.

She claims that in the 1980s her husband was prone to heavy drinking which took him to the "brink of total mental and physical collapse", and she says that he repeatedly lied to her while having six affairs, including the one with Gaynor Regan, now the second Mrs Cook.



"You're paranoid — I'm writing a shopping list"

Potentially as wounding to Mr Cook's political future was her description of how the former left-wing firebrand admitted he had "sold his soul to the devil" to remain aboard Mr Blair's new Labour project.

Mr Blair dismissed the claims as little more than "scandal and gossip and trivia", insisting it was irrelevant when compared to the business of government. But he appeared to concede that there were personal differences among senior ministers, a running theme since Peter Mandelson's resignation. He said: "You could go to any organisation, any big business, and say there's this personal problem with this individual or this personal difficulty. But most people would say, well, judge the organisation or company on whether they're doing the things they're supposed to do well."

The Tories leapt on Mrs Cook's revelations, claiming that the Foreign Secretary would no longer be able to do his job. Iain Duncan-Smith, the Tory social security spokesman, said they made him a "laughing-stock", while Michael Howard, the Shadow Foreign Secretary, said the claims were "another nail in Robin Cook's political coffin".

Labour insiders said the claims did not necessarily affect Mr Cook's long-term future, although they conceded that much depended on how quickly he was able to shift to focus back onto his job.

Mr Cook declined to comment on his former wife's book. As part of a routine working day at Chevening, his grace-and-favour mansion in Kent, he spent 20 minutes on the telephone to Madelaine Albright, the US Secretary of State, discussing Kosovo and Iraq, as well as preparing a statement on Yemen which he will deliver to the Commons today.

MIKE WILKINSON



Margaret Cook leaving her Edinburgh home yesterday as a storm broke over her tales of infidelity and drunkenness

But in a clear sign that the headlines prompted by the book were far worse than he had feared, he changed his original strategy for dealing with the book's publication. He had asked friends to say nothing, but in the event, Labour MPs queued up to rebut her claims — especially about his drinking habits.

Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, said the suggestion that he had a drink problem "certainly isn't the Robin I know and have known for many years". And Donald Anderson, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Select Committee, said that Mrs Cook's "totally incredible" claim about her former husband's drinking cast doubt on her other allegations.

The former Cabinet minister Harriet Harman, who worked with Mr Cook on Labour's health team at the time Mrs Cook says he was drinking heavily, said she was "astonished" by the claims.

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Cash is there to give big pay rise to nurses

By Janet Bush
Economics Editor

THE Government could comfortably afford an above-average pay increase for Britain's nurses, in spite of the threat of economic recession this year, according to City forecasts.

The predictions suggest that the Government is heading for a budget surplus of up to £10 billion this year because tax receipts have been far higher than expected.

This war chest of public money means that finances will still be roughly in balance even if the economy slows down sharper than expected.

Michael Saunders of the American investment house Salomon Smith Barney, said: "The UK's public finances seem to be in better shape than anyone has dared to believe."

He said that the huge surplus now expected would ease worries about the affordability of the generous public spending plans announced in the autumn and might even allow the Chancellor to cut business taxes.

Against this background, a generous increase in nurses' pay is affordable so long as the Treasury believes that it would pay a political dividend.

Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, is reported to be in favour of a 5 per cent increase, payable in full rather than phased. The question is whether the Treasury will be prepared to find the extra cash as well as compromise on its determination to continue bearing down on public sector pay.

A 5 per cent increase — the level expected to be recommended by the pay review body this week — would add about £330 million to the £6.6 billion annual nurses' bill.

Nurses' shortage, page 2
Leading article, page 21

Yemeni pledge

Yemeni ministers have promised that they will not use force to try to free John Brooke, a British oil worker seized by tribesman on Saturday, and negotiations for his release are continuing.

His abductors, who are demanding the release of a comrade accused of murder and sabotage, say that he is being well-treated, but that he will be killed if troops surrounding their hideout attempt a rescue........Page 3

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Betty Boothroyd set to quit early as Speaker

By Our Political Correspondent

BETTY BOOTHROYD is considering standing down as Speaker of the House of Commons before the next election.

Ministers believe Miss Boothroyd could retire from her role as one of the nation's figureheads in 2000, earlier than expected.

She will be 70 shortly before the millennium, and having seen through both milestones from the Speaker's chair her friends believe she may give her successor a start in the tail end of this Parliament.

Retiring then would still guarantee her a place as one of the longest-serving Speakers in recent memory, as well as being the first woman to hold the office. It would also spark a by-election in her West Bromwich West constituency, as former Speakers do not return to the Commons backbenches.

Labour MPs have recently detected signs of fatigue in the Speaker, who has been at loggerheads with ministers over their habit of making government announcements outside the Commons.

She is also deeply conservative as a parliamentarian, and has set herself four-square against the Government's attempts to modernise the Palace of Westminster.

Although widely-admired by her multi-million-strong television audience worldwide, Miss Boothroyd, a former Tiller girl, has attracted private criticism from both sides of the House.

Loyalist Labour MPs feel she can be too lenient in giving air time in the Commons chamber to government critics, such as Tony Benn and George Galloway over Iraq.

But Tories used to make the same complaint when they were in government and friends of the Speaker say it shows she is doing her job.

Miss Boothroyd has signalled that her reign would come to an end at the next election. But she has told friends she may go earlier. "There's general expectation that she won't stand at the next election," said one.

The suggestion that Miss Boothroyd will go sooner rather than later will accelerate the search for a successor. The most obvious candidate is Sir Alan Haselhurst, one of her Tory deputies. Although lacking her star quality, he has the respect of all sides of the House.

A strong contender is Alan Beith, the Liberal Democrat deputy leader. Other Tory candidates would include former Cabinet ministers Tom King and John MacGregor.

Santer battles to stave off censure

From Charles Bremner in Brussels

JACQUES SANTER goes before the European Parliament with his 19 commissioners tonight in an attempt to defuse a censure vote that is certain to inflict heavy political damage and could force the whole Brussels executive to resign.

In the first serious showdown with the executive since the Strasbourg assembly acquired more muscle under the Maastricht treaty, many of the 626 MEPs are determined to hold the Commission to account for mismanagement, fraud, corruption and other malpractices. Mr Santer, the Commission President, will need every ounce of his political skill to ensure that he does not spend his final 11 months in office as the lamest of ducks.

He is, however, expected to escape the all-or-nothing vote on Thursday, which requires a two-thirds majority and which would sack his whole team, paralysing all business ahead of negotiations on European Union spending. The leadership of the dominant Socialist bloc is not backing censure, although its British leader Pauline Green precipitated the crisis by proposing the motion last month to clear the air after Parliament refused to sign off the Commission's accounts.

Leaders of the centre-right European People's Party, the second group, wants its MEPs to back the Commission, provided Mr Santer promises reform. Support for all-out censure comes from the Greens and other groups, including German Socialist rebels.

However, with passions running high and the Commission gripped by a mood of siege, the outcome remains uncertain.

EU showdown, page 13
Leading article, page 21

Marquess of Bristol found dead in bed

By Claudia Joseph

THE Marquess of Bristol, who scandalised society with his debauchery and drug abuse, has died suddenly at his Suffolk home, aged 44.

Lord Bristol, who was jailed twice for possessing drugs, was found dead in bed yesterday morning by staff at Little Horringer Hall on the Ickworth estate.

His death comes a year after that of his half-brother and then heir, Lord Nicholas Hervey, a schizophrenic who was found hanged at his London flat at the age of 36. His other half-brother, Lord Frederick Hervey, who left Eton for university last year, will become the eighth Marquess.

Lord Bristol's agent, Simon Pott, said last night that the marquess had visited the doctor last week with a bout of flu, but that his death was still a great shock. "He was perfectly well over Christmas and was discussing going to the Bahamas for a couple of weeks.

"I spoke to him on Friday and he was a bit under the weather, but he was making plans for his holiday. He had a light meal on Saturday evening but was found dead yesterday. Everyone is devastated."

Lord Bristol, who was educated at Harrow and Neuchatel University, had a chequered life starting with a strict childhood, in which he once claimed that he was made to wear long white gloves. Those years, coupled with his parents' divorce when he was five, were said to have been the root of his life of debauchery and frequent brushes with the law. He was fined for stealing traffic bollards, was once accused of blasting the door of a fridge with a shotgun to get a bottle of champagne, and found himself unwelcome in both America and Australia because of his drugs habit.

He was married in 1984 to the 20-year-old daughter of a property developer, but that ended in divorce and he swiftly returned to his old lifestyle.

Lord Bristol inherited £4 million, the 4,000-acre Ickworth estate, a 57,000-acre sheep station in Australia and four oil wells from his father in 1985, and he once estimated his personal fortune at £30 million. But last April he sold the Ickworth estate to the National Trust.

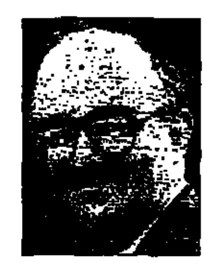
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Lord Bristol, who was 44, had flu last week

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The opinion formers.... Challenging minds in the changing Times



Peter Riddell

'The challenge for Labour is, can Blair be more like Thatcher?'



Anna Blundy

'In Russia you simply queue up and then get what you're given'



William Rees-Mogg

'The psychological similarities of Cook and Clinton are striking'

TOMORROW



An authoritative voice in defence of sanity, and spiked with wit

Libby Purves



An astringent view from the Right, calculated to provoke

Michael Gove

We need 12,000 more nurses, say hospitals

By Ian Murray, Health Correspondent

THE NHS is short of between 12,000 and 13,000 nurses, according to the Royal College of Nursing.

The shortfall, based on vacancies reported by three quarters of hospitals in England, Wales and Scotland last April, shows a steep rise from the 8,000 figure quoted up to now by the Department of Health. The RCN believes that the figure is even higher.

Recruitment remains extremely difficult but the Government faces having to find *double the 15,000 staff it promised* to hire during the next three years if it is to bring the NHS up to full nursing strength.

Nurses cost £7 billion out of the £44 billion spent on the NHS, but the whole service is on the edge of crisis because there is a shortage of nurses on almost every ward in the land. The NHS has a complement of 295,000 nurses, but part-time working means that 370,000 are needed to do all the work.

Recruitment to nursing courses, however, is proving increasingly difficult, with fewer young people apparently attracted by a career of high dedication and relatively low pay.

There is a high and growing drop-out rate from among those who are accepted. Last year 14 per cent of entries discontinued their course, 2 per cent more than in the previous year. New admissions to the register have fallen by 26 per cent in the past seven years. The number of students in pre-registration nursing education has dropped from 53,500 to 45,500 in the past four years.

Recruits from overseas have become an essential part of staffing and one nurse in six joining the register has come from abroad. Many of the nurses come from developing countries which means that their skills are lost to a place *that arguably needs them even* more than Britain.

Even so the shortage in Britain is having serious consequences for the entire health service. A survey by the Royal College of Nursing in early December — before the current crisis — found that 71 per cent of wards reported nursing vacancies, with one in ten wards at least four registered nurses short.

On average there were only three nurses available for the early day shifts on wards with 27 patients and usually a nurse has to look after ten beds. Nurses have had so many duties devolved to them because of the shortage of doctors that they are responsible *for the sole care throughout* the day of a quarter of all patients.

On the day of the survey one in ten posts was filled by an agency nurse. The RCN calculates that agency and overtime nursing costs the NHS £600 million a year. Agency nurses can earn up to 15 per cent more than inside the NHS and can chose the shifts they want to work. The RCN argues that if their pay claim for parity with teachers were met it would stop the haemorrhage of trained staff and boost recruitment to the necessary levels. The cost would be £1.2 billion — double the amount spent on agencies and overtime but would bring stability and confidence to the workforce.

After three years training a nurse can expect to earn no more than £12,855 — 17 per cent below the starting rate for a teacher.

If the nurse does stay with *the job the highest pay for a* post with trust-wide responsibilities is £26,965. In September the Government announced a £1,000 a year bonus for extra responsibility, but this will be available only to 200 working in senior grades.

Leading article, page 21

Young volunteers to ease staffing crisis

By John O'Leary, Education Correspondent

THOUSANDS of young millennium volunteers will help *to ease the staffing shortages* in hospitals and schools, as well as revitalising sink estates, under plans to be announced this week.

The £50 million scheme has run into a series of delays since featuring in Labour's election manifesto. Once billed as a civilian equivalent *of national service, it was in*tended to cater for 100,000 volunteers by next year, but has been scaled down after disagreements over long-term funding and leadership of the programme.

Young people aged 16-25 will receive out-of-pocket expenses to work on a range of community-based projects. Local authorities and voluntary *bodies will be invited to bid* for Government support in three stages, starting this spring. The scheme, mostly for unemployed young people, will be based on pilot projects that have been running for three years, with funding from the Sainsbury store chain, in Cardiff, Sunder*land and South*wark, South London. Volunteers have helped to raise reading standards in primary schools and assisted auxiliary staff in hospitals and retirement homes, as well as working on environmental projects.

David Blunkett, the Education and Employment Secretary, has waged a lengthy campaign in Whitehall to establish a large-scale volunteering initiative. Until last year's negotiations with the Treasury, only £15 million from the Windfall Tax on the former public utilities had been allocated to the scheme.

Long an advocate of volunteer work as a route into employment as well as a benefit *to the community,* Mr Blunkett has said the scheme will offer young people a sense of identity and the chance to feel welcomed rather than rejected. The first phase is likely to include some existing projects as well as the most innovative proposals that can be under way before the end of the year.



Tony Blair with Sir David Frost yesterday. The Prime Minister denied he was too far removed from the party's roots

Ministers unveil spending plans in 'relaunch week'

By Roland Watson
Political Correspondent

CABINET ministers will this week announce a series of policy initiatives as part of an attempt to shift the focus from personalities and to issues.

David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, will today announce that primary school pupils will have an hour-long mathematics lesson every day from September. A further £18 million will go towards extending the summer holiday "revision classes" in literacy and numeracy for below par pupils into the Easter break.

Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, will unveil £250 million for a strategy to combat burglary, covering more than two million residents in 500 high crime areas. The money will go towards security measures such as closed circuit televison

Alistair Darling, the Social Security Secretry, will announce £80 million for pilot projects to help create a "single gateway" for all claimants entering the benefit system. *It is the latest step in requiring* all claimants to turn up for job interviews before being awarded benefits.

The initiatives follow the Prime Minister's assertion during his speech last week in Cape Town last he is prepared to inject an authoritarian streak into his government to achieve necessary reforms.

With MPs returning to Westminster today for the first time since the resignations of Peter Mandelson and Geoffrey Robinson, Tony Blair used an interview with Sir David Frost on BBC1 yesterday to try to allay the fears of some Labour MPs that he was becoming too remote from their concerns.

The Prime Minister made clear that he had been kept up to date with the troubles facing the National Health Service while he was on holiday in the Seychelles and during official government visit to South Africa. "I'm not going to tolerate a health service where people are lying on trolleys waiting for treatment," he said.

He also indicated that he had digested the concerns raised by some senior minis*ters about his links with the Liberal Demo*crats. Although he maintained it was "sensible" to explore common ground between *the two parties, Mr Blair dismissed the* idea of Paddy Ashdown joining the Cabinet. He appeared to dash Liberal Democrat hopes of a referendum on proportional representation before the next election.

Mr Blair said he was "fed up" with facing questions about his relationship with Gordon Brown, insisting it was "as strong as any relationship between any Prime Minister and Chancellor there's every been". He conceded that the gossip about personalities in the Government was fuelled from the inside, but he gave it no *currency. "Some of the lower-downs twit*ter about a bit," he said.

He insisted that it was the "big-picture questions" like health, education and crime that mattered to voters. He said: "I don't say everything in the garden is rosy. There are a lot of problems we've got to sort out. But we are sorting them out." He said that because the Conservatives had not developed criticism on policy issues, *the focus was diverted to personalities.*

Brown accused over girlfriend's contract

By Mark Inglefield, Political Reporter

AS THE Prime Minister called for an end to the media's thirst for "scandal and gossip" yesterday two of his most senior ministers as well as his press spokesman, Alastair Campbell, found themselves under fire for alleged wrongdoing.

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was accused of breaching the Ministerial Code after it emerged that *his political ally and friend,* Geoffrey Robinson, the former Paymaster General, had awarded a private £100,000 contract to a company co-owned by Sarah Macaulay, the Chancellor's girlfriend.

*Ms Macaulay's public rela*tions company receives £3,000 a month for arranging promotional events for the *New Statesman*, the left-wing magazine owned by Mr Robinson. A spokesman for the company, Hobsbawn—Macaulay, said the contract was won fairly by "word of mouth".

But the Tories swiftly demanded that the Prime Minister carry out a full investigation into the deal, which they believe infringes the part of the Ministerial Code that warns members of the Government to guard against any risk of potential conflicts of interest affecting themselves or their "spouse or partner".

David Heathcoat-Amory, the Tory Treasury spokesman, said: "Gordon Brown and Geoffrey Robinson seem to have a driven a coach and horses through the Ministerial Code. Mr Robinson has effectively paid over £100,000 to Mr *Brown's partner's company.* In return he (Mr Robinson) kept his ministerial job long after his sell-by date. Everybody knows it was Gordon Brown who persuaded the Prime Minister not to sack him."

The second attack was directed at Dr Jack Cunningham, the "cabinet enforcer", who was accused of squandering taxpayers' money on private jets costing £45,950 when he was Agriculture Minister. The information was supplied *by his successor in that* department Nick Brown.

Tim Yeo, the shadow Agriculture Minister, said: "What is clear is that power has well and truly gone to the heads of ministers in this Government." The Ministry of Agriculture, however, insisted that the flights "conformed with the rules".

Alastair Campbell was attacked for using a chauffeured Government car to travel to work, a perk not enjoyed by any of his predecessors.

Downing Street said he was *"a member of the Govern*ment" although admitted that technically he was only "an official". This status was seemingly confirmed by an article in *The Sunday Times* by Romola Christopherson, until the be*ginning of this* month head of information at the Department of Health. He said Mr Campbell *was the second* most powerful person in the Government.

Heath inquiry

Sir Edward Heath could be investigated by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards for not fully declar*ing his private business* concerns in the House of Commons Register of Members' Interests. The former *Prime* Minsister strongly denies any wrongdoing.

Protesters shut new bypass

THE Newbury bypass was closed yesterday when about 200 environmental protesters spilt on to the recently opened road and left rocks and manhole covers on the carriageway, police said.

Some marched two miles carrying banners while others ripped rocks from the embankment and dumped them, according to Thames Valley Police. The central reservation was also damaged. One person was arrested for obstruction and further arrests were expected.

The bypass was the scene of *one of Britain's most violent en*vironmental demonstrations, with 1,000 people arrested during a passionate campaign against the 100 million project.

About 250 protesters had planned a march and a rally *close to the bypass to mark the* third anniversary of the clearance programme to prepare for the controversial eight-mile road. But police said that most of them left the official route and spilled on to the road for about two hours.

The police spokesman the "contempt" shown toward mo*torists, and a march organiser* also criticised the dumping of rocks on the road.

Diana manslaughter charge unlikely

From Adam Sage in Paris

THE French judge investigating the car *crash that killed Diana, Princess of* Wales is unlikely to press manslaughter charges in connection with the case, according to French legal sources.

Judge Hervé Stephan is expected to recommend no more than minor charges against three of the paparazzi under investigation. Yesterday a lawyer involved in the case said: "The judge's report will not be completed until later this month, and even after that all the lawyers can ask him to follow up other lines of inquiry. So there is time for him to change his mind."

But he said M Stephan had indicated that he believed Henri Paul, the driver of the Princess's car, was solely responsible for the *accident* in August 1997, losing control as a result of drinking and speeding.

The judge is reluctant to press manslaughter charges against any of those under investigation, including nine paparazzi, a dispatch rider, the managers of the Ritz Hotel, which employed M Paul, and the owners of the limousine hire company that let the car. There is little evidence to suggest that the photographers who pursued the Princess forced her car off the road, yet there is pressure in France for the 16-month inquiry to end with a public court hearing. Lawyers say the three *photographers are likely to be* charged with the relatively minor offence of failing to assist a person in danger.

They may also face charges of obstructing the emergency services. Witnesses said that the paparazzi continued to take photographs, blocking policeman and doctors as they attempted to reach the car.

هكذا من الإصل

British hostage reported 'alive and well'

Yemen tribesmen demand release of comrade for abducted oilman, writes Daniel McGrory in Aden

TENSE negotiations continued last night for the release of John Brooke, the kidnapped oil worker, after Yemeni ministers promised Britain they will not use force to resolve the abduction.

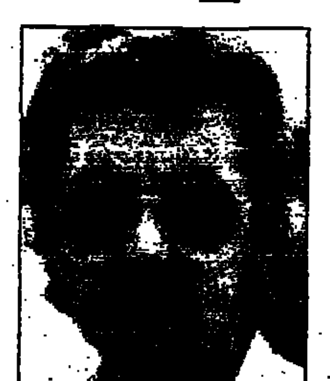
Armed tribesman who fought their way inside a guarded compound to seize Mr Brooke are demanding the release of a comrade accused of murder and sabotage in exchange for Mr Brooke's freedom.

Mohammed Hussein Arab, Yemen's Interior Minister, insisted last night that Mr Brooke was "alive and well". Tribal leaders also assured negotiators sent by the Yemen government he was being well treated, but warned he would be killed if troops surrounding their hideout, north of the oil rich Marib region, attempt a rescue.

While it was feared this latest hostage crisis could drag on for weeks, security chiefs were investigating alleged links between a a London mosque and the plot to blow up British targets in Aden on Christmas Day.

In a new development one of the five Britons arrested as part of that plot has allegedly confessed he was paid $2,000 (£1,600) to bomb the British Consulate, the Anglican Church and Aden's biggest hotel in simultaneous attacks. Mohsen Ghailan, from London, is also said to have admitted meeting Abu Hassan, the leader of the kidnap gang that abducted 16 western tourists. They are alleged to have had two meetings just hours before secret police rounded up the Britons.

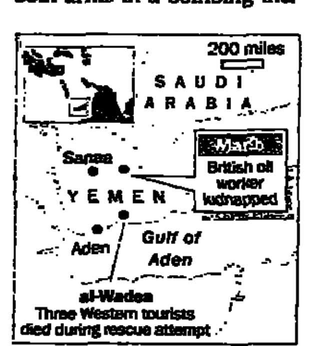
He is also said to have described himself as a mercenary as he told police he was an atheist who came to Yemen for money. Questioned in Aden's central security headquarters at the weekend the man apparantly disclosed links to a London group known as "Ansar Sharia", the Followers of Islamic Law. The group is headed by Hamza Al Masri, also known as Abu Hamza, a prominent Moslem cleric who preaches at the Finsbury Park mosque, north London, and who is known for his extremist views.



Brooke: kidnapped by armed tribesmen

Last night in Aden security chiefs were intensifying their search for a 17-year-old Briton, Mohammed Kamel Mustapha, who they wish to speak with in connection with the Christmas Day plot. The teenager, whose passport was allegedly found in a terrorist hideout, is believed to be Al Masri's son. Scotland Yard sources confirmed that the alleged links were under investigation.

If proved, it will seriously embarrass British authorities that such an Islamic terrorist plot is connected with a London mosque and is using young British followers. The cleric under investigation is known to have raised thousands of pounds over recent years in Britain for extreme Islamic causes abroad and lost both arms in a bombing incident in the Afghan war. When three of the Britons were arrested, Yemeni officials allegedly found video cassettes in their hotel room which came from a London-based Islamic fundamentalist group which show Islamic terrorists in training camps.



Yemeni authorities are believed to be examining whether any of the five suspects had visited the terrorist camp of Abu Hassan, who days later seized 16 hostages to avenge the foiled Christmas Day plot.

Security sources say the bombers drove away from Hassan's camp with a boot full of explosives and weapons, including rocket propelled grenades. The British man who allegedly confessed his part in the plot is said to have admitted handling TNT explosives. Yemeni authorities say there was "a substantial amount of explosive which would caused a massive loss of life".

The group is said to have picked Aden because of its British colonial past and as it was seen as an easy target. The already strained relations between Whitehall and Sana'a over the handling of the kidnapping in which three Britons and an Australian died were not helped by complaints from some of the Britons held in an Aden detention centre that they have been tortured.

MPs should learn more today about the British links to the recent terrorist outrages in Yemen when Robin Cook makes a full statement.

Winter's tale takes its usual twist

FOR some it was a chance to take a walk through beautiful countryside dusted with snow in the first icy spell of 1999. For others it was a time to shiver and wonder what happened to last week's warmer weather.

For the meteorologists it was just business as usual. One said: "We have seen drastic changes in temperature, but it's just standard British weather, it can flip between extremes."

Flurries of snow were reported along Britain's eastern coast. In Leeming, North Yorkshire, residents woke to a covering of 2.3 inches. Temperatures fell as low as -7C (19F) in Glasgow, and -2C (36F) at Heathrow. Much of Northern Ireland was gripped by freezing fog, prompting a severe weather warning.

The cold came on the heels of unseasonably mild weather, which saw temperatures in London hit a record high for January of 16C (61F). Martin Airey, a forecaster at the independent PA WeatherCentre, said: "It will flip again, becoming very unsettled."

Forecast, page 24



JOHN GILES

Winter wonderland: hikers enjoying the snow on the moors yesterday near Pickering in North Yorkshire. More is expected to fall over parts of eastern England today

Computer virus has date with destiny

By Nick Nuttall

A COMPUTER virus that "kills" a machine's start-up system is spreading, experts said yesterday.

The rogue electronic code, designed to trigger on April 26 and known as Variant CIH, is spread by people downloading games or buying infected CDs.

The computer's drives appear to hum into life. But the screen is blank and the machine fails to operate. The computer is effectively dead.

Chris Hilder, a network and security consultant at the National Computing Centre in Manchester, pointed to the emergence of several recent computer viruses that push electronic warfare into new realms. Experts fear that these may be test-runs for even more destructive rogue codes. Back Orifice — a pun on Microsoft's Back Office products — and Net Bus allow a user thousands of miles away to take over someone else's PC keyboard, mouse and other functions.

The viruses also allow someone to hijack the computer's speakers and microphones, allowing them to listen in on private conversations.

Shakespeare theatre site identified

By Norman Hammond, Archaeology Correspondent

THE site of Shakespeare's first theatre may have been pinpointed, not far from London's Liverpool Street Station.

The playhouse, known as the Theatre, was known to be in the Shoreditch area, but Simon Blatherwick has now documented an exact site as part of an English Heritage survey of probably surviving remains of Shakesperean playhouses. He believes that substantial archaeological remains of the Theatre may survive.

"This is a hugely important site," he said. Mr Blatherwick previously co-directed excavation of the Rose, the first such playhouse to be discovered, in Southwark. Before that it had been generally assumed that no remains of Elizabethan playhouses survived.

The Theatre was built in 1576, and several of Shakespeare's plays, including *Richard III* and *Romeo and Juliet*, were first staged there, as well as works by others. Its significance is the greater because in December 1598 the players who owned the building began to take it down. The timbers were shipped over the Thames.

In Southwark they were used to build the Globe, the theatre most associated with Shakespeare's plays — which has been reconstructed under the late Sam Wanamaker's direction. The Globe's design was based on its precursor, and so the remains of the Theatre have enormous potential. Today the site is occupied by two Victorian structures at the junction of Curtain Road and New Inn Yard. Mr Blatherwick's investigations suggest that the structures do not have cellars deep enough to have destroyed the archaeological deposits.

A wealth of documents exist, mainly from lawsuits between the actors' company and the landlord of the Theatre's site, and also from the construction of the Globe.

Several other playhouse sites of the Shakespearean age also have high archaeological potential, the survey suggests. Among them is that of the Hope, which was built in 1613 near the Rose as a theatre and bear-baiting arena, and where Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* was first performed. Nearly two dozen theatre sites have been located, including one near St Paul's Cathedral, where the offices of *The Times* stood for 200 years.

"The probable archaeological survival of so many Elizabethan and Jacobean playhouses means we could be on the brink of a revolution in theatre studies," said Dr Jean Wilson. "We may learn the exact plan of Shakespeare's 'Wooden O'."

Irish told to get their eyes smiling again

By Audrey Magee, Ireland Correspondent

THE Irish will be taught to be friendlier in a £250,000 government campaign intended to improve the country's reputation for hospitality.

Concern has been mounting that the smiling welcome that was once Ireland's trademark has fallen by the wayside as the tourist industry focuses on making as much money as possible from the millions who visit Ireland each year.

Government and tourism agencies plan to offer tuition reminding hoteliers and restaurateurs how to be friendly. The campaign, which is to be completed by the start of summer, follows complaints from visitors that the Irish are noticeably less welcoming than they used to be.

A decade ago visitors to bed-and-breakfast establishments were likely to be greeted with a glass of whiskey and offered a place at the family dinner table. Now the tourist is more likely to be directed to a boxy room with tea-making facilities. In place of the traditional Irish "crack" is a short conversation about keys and meal times, and the traveller who once left with a wealth of tales about local life has often become just another number passing through an increasingly busy industry.

"People come to Ireland because it is friendly and there is a feeling abroad that we need to remind people in the tourism industry of that," said John Brown, of Bord Failte, the Irish tourism board.

The number of tourists visiting Ireland doubled to 5 million between 1988 and 1997. The industry predicts that 6 million will arrive this year and 7 million in 2002. Over the next four months workers in the industry will be sent guidance outlining the way in which they should welcome them and deal with their complaints.

Surveys of the visitors have repeatedly shown that they are attracted by the famed warmth and spontaneity of the Irish people. Most say that they enjoyed their holidays, but the Irish Tourist Industry Confederation gave warning this week that the tourism boom risked "prompting an impersonal reaction from the population".

One owner of a B&B in Galway, who declined to be named, said that she doubted the campaign would make much difference: "People want to sit and chat for ages. They are in holiday mode, but we have beds to make, children to attend to and we really don't have time. It's a pity, but it's the way it is."

Cartoon capers force Disney recall

From Giles Whittell in Los Angeles

THE Walt Disney Company has recalled 3.4 million copies of a cartoon video because two of its 110,000 frames contain unspecified "objectionable" images.

The offending frames in *The Rescuers*, a story about two mice saving a young girl on a riverboat, are visible only to very careful viewers. Each doctored image flashes by in a thirtieth of a second, a spokeswoman said, adding that the recall was necessary for the company "to keep its promise to families that they can trust and rely on the Disney brand".

Rumours of sabotage in the studio's giant animation division have surfaced before, but never been proved. They include some of the more imaginative plot twists in cartoon mythology, including a glimpse of a priest with an erect penis in *The Little Mermaid*, the appearance of the word "sex" in a cloud of dust in *The Lion King*, and an exhortation from *Aladdin* for "good teenagers" to "take off your clothes".

The claims were first circulated by the American Life League, a fundamentalist Christian group opposed to abortion and to what it saw as Disney's betrayal of its pro-family stance with such policies as health benefits for the partners of gay employees. Sensing the presence of latter-day Luddites in the bowels of a corporate giant, *The Washington Post*, among other newspapers, brought the claims to national attention.

Aladdin's apparent naughtiness was traced by *The Wall Street Journal* to two young men, one in Colorado and one in Iowa, claiming to have heard the order to undress. Instead of "Good teenagers, take off your clothes," however, most listeners heard, "Scat good tiger. Take off and go." The supposedly erect member in *The Little Mermaid* is in fact a knobbly knee emerging briefly from under a cassock, Disney and its defenders insist.

The presence of the word "sex" anywhere in *The Lion King* remains moot.

Cook keeps his mind on busy week ahead

Foreign Secretary hopes Yemen and Europe will avert media spotlight, reports **Roland Watson**

ROBIN COOK will seek today to concentrate on "government rather than gossip" as he tries to put the headlines about his failed marriage behind him.

The Foreign Secretary's friends insisted yesterday that, despite the revelations of his former wife, Mr Cook's mind was firmly focused on his job. He spent the weekend at Chevening, his government country retreat, but will return to the political limelight today at the start of a busy week of official and party engagements.

It will begin this afternoon with a Commons statement on the crisis in Yemen, and will finish on Saturday with a vigorous defence of Tony Blair and the Government to party activists. Mr Cook's friends hope that the programme, which includes a mid-week trip to The Hague, will refocus attention on his public role rather than his private life.

His speech on Saturday, to Labour's National Policy Forum, which he chairs, is also designed to scotch the suggestion that he is a less-than-wholehearted member of the new Labour project.

"This is a modern Government, which is delivering more help to the socially excluded than we managed under some old Labour Governments," he will tell the party gathering in Swansea. He will say that the working families tax credit and the increase in child benefit are two ways in which the Government is "confidently and imaginatively" tackling issues faced by the less well-off.

Mr Cook will also seek to change the perception that he views Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, as a "longstanding adversary", in his former wife's words, by praising some of his key policies.

Mr Cook spent yesterday drafting his Commons statement, and spoketo the Yemeni Prime Minsiter. He did not

THE MINISTER

ask for *The Sunday Times*, which carried extracts from his former wife's book, to be faxed to him on Saturday night, nor did he read it yesterday, said a friend authorised to speak on his behalf.

On Wednesday Mr Cook will travel to The Hague as the latest part of a tour of European capitals to talk to EU Governments about the aftermath of the bombing of Iraq.

However, his tenure at the Foreign Office is likely to come in for criticism when Sir David Gore-Booth, the former High Commissioner in New Delhi, gives evidence to the Foreign Affairs Select Committee. Sir David has already blamed Mr Cook for falling morale among civil servants and concentrating on image rather than policy in a stinging valedictory telegram revealed in *The Times* last week.

Although Mr Cook had been braced for the fallout from his former wife's book, the strength of her claims and the potency of the headlines they created clearly took him aback. Mr Cook had previously warned his friends not to react for fear of allowing the episode to degenerate into a war of words. But the orders appeared to have been relaxed, allowing a series of friends to go on the record to deny he had ever had a drinking problem.


Barbara Follett: "I have never seen him tipsy"

Donald Anderson, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Select Committee, which has repeatedly clashed with Mr Cook over Sierra Leone, said that Mrs Cook's revelations would leave the Foreign Secretary "undiminished" in the eyes of Labour MPs.

"Apart from the drink allegation — which I personally find totally incredible and which must cast doubt on the other allegations as a result — all these matters have been well trailed," he said. "They are most unlikely to damage the Foreign Secretary either with the Parliamentary Labour Party or with his foreign counterparts."

Karen Buck, the MP for Regents Park and Kensington North, who worked closely with Mr Cook during the late 1980s, said that she did not recognise the portrait painted by his ex-wife. "He was certainly not a drinker. He was one of the most abstemious MPs I know," she said. She added that supporters would rally to Mr Cook. "The book will be seen as genuinely unfair. It goes completely against the grain of what people know of Robin, and also it has nothing to do with his job."

Barbara Follett, the Labour MP for Stevenage, who has known Mr Cook for 15 years, said: "In all that time I have never seen him even slightly tipsy. I am sorry that the pronouncements of one partner in this case have been given such a public airing."

One minister said: "People behave well in marriages, people behave badly in marriages. But this is an awful breach of the sort of intimacy that we take for granted."


Looking for his heart: Robin Cook, as Shadow Health Minister in January 1989, with junior doctors in London after discussing hours of work

His and hers: the rival reactions

By Gillian Harris and Jason Allardyce

FRIENDS of Margaret Cook claimed yesterday that her portrayal of the Foreign Secretary as a drunken, politically expedient serial adulterer was a fair one.

They denied that she was a scorned wife seeking revenge. "From what Margaret has told me it could have been an awful lot worse," said one. "I would say Robin has got off lightly. The stuff in the papers is tame."

Supporters of Robin Cook dismissed his wife's account of their marriage breakdown as "absolute nonsense" and claimed that some of the accusations levelled against the Foreign Secretary were false.

A close friend said: "I have known Robin for more than

WHAT FRIENDS SAY

20 years and I genuinely do not recognise the man as he is portrayed in this book. I have never seen him drunk or the worse for wear. And to say he was not functioning around 1987 is ridiculous, because at that time he was appointed Shadow Health Minister and he was running rings around the Tories."

If Mrs Cook had any doubts about disclosing the secrets of her former husband's private life, she disguised them yesterday. As she strode out of her 17th-century home in Edinburgh, accompanied by her new partner, Robin Howie, she smiled broadly but declined to comment on the storm of publicity generated by the publication of her autobiography, *A Slight and Delicate Creature*.

Mrs Cook, a consultant haematologist at St John's Hospital in Livingston, West Lothian, was aware of the impact of her revelations, which include claims that her former husband had a string of extra-marital affairs, beginning in 1974 when Mrs Cook was pregnant with their second son.

Earlier, Mr Howie, a retired company director who met Mrs Cook through a dating agency last August, arrived at her home bearing a bundle of newspapers, almost all of which featured Mr Cook's alleged philandering on the front page. Reading them, Mrs Cook could be left in no doubt that her book will not only embarrass the Foreign Secretary but possibly damage his career.

Friends insist that Mrs Cook did not intend to jeopardise her former husband's job with her book, which evolved into an autobiography after her attempts at writing a novel about political marriages collapsed.

"She wrote the book for two reasons," said one friend, who declined to be named. "The first was she was in a white-hot rage that she had been left by Robin Cook. The second was that once she had calmed down, she thought that this was a story which would be of considerable interest to other women. She has got it all out. She seems very happy now. She has moved on, as she says in her book."

> ‘She wrote in a white-hot rage and thought that this story would be of considerable interest to other women. She seems very happy now’

But those in Mr Cook's camp believe the acidic tone of the book is evidence that Mrs Cook has not put the painful events of 1997 behind her. It is understood that the book's publication has also caused tension between Mrs Cook and her sons, Christopher, 25, a lawyer who lives with her in Edinburgh, and Peter, an engineering student at Aberdeen University.

According to a friend, her sons tried to discourage her from writing the book and were disappointed when they failed. Although Christopher and Peter were hurt by their parents' divorce, they have maintained good relationships with both. They did not attend Mr Cook's secret wedding to Gaynor Regan last April but gave him cufflinks from Selfridges as a present.

One supporter said the book's publication was designed to harm the Foreign Secretary and could have a knock-on effect of upsetting their sons. "He did not need this, the boys did not need this and the Government did not need this," he said.

But he added that the revelations would not detract the Foreign Secretary from his duties and his new life with Gaynor. "He's happily married and getting on with his job. His ambition is to be the longest serving Foreign Secretary and he's doing a superb job and has the support of the Prime Minister."





Left in the lurch: Ali Cockayne, Lady Graham-Moon, Penelope Mortimer and Diana, Princess of Wales

Public revenge can be so sweet – and so lucrative

By Carol Midgley
Media Correspondent

HISTORY is littered with the ruined reputations of men who have indulged in extramarital affairs while carelessly underestimating their wives' capacity to extract revenge.

Margaret Cook yesterday joined a list of notorious avengers who have punished their famous husbands in the most damaging way possible — in the full glare of the media.

But while Mrs Cook may now be a rumoured £175,000 better off from the serialisation of her book, she may live to regret executing such a ruthless character assassination.

Diana, Princess of Wales, the most famous wronged wife of the modern age, privately admitted that she later wished she had not castigated her husband, his mistress and the entire Royal Family in her *Panorama* interview.

While bitterness can fade, the printed word is immortal — and can be read years later by bewildered children who are forced to relive the breakdown of their parent's marriage.

However, there are those

REJECTED WOMEN

who have turned revenge into a veritable boom industry. Lady Graham-Moon, who cut up her husband's suits and distributed his wine cellar on the doorsteps of their country neighbours after discovering his infidelity, became an overnight celebrity and regularly appears on television and radio shows talking about the subject.

Penelope Mortimer achieved priceless publicity when she chose to expose the womanising of her former husband, the playwright John Mortimer, in her candid autobiography.

Many women have found positive ways to channel their pain. Patsy Wilcox, who initially was incandescent with rage when her husband, Desmond, left her for her best friend, Esther Rantzen, calmed down and went on to write a book to help others through the trauma of divorce.

In it, she refused to attack Ms Rantzen personally, but described in detail about lying awake at night weeping into her pillow and subtly mentions that betrayal by a close friend is one of the most traumatic crosses to bear.

This weekend Ali Cockayne, mother of Will Carling's baby son, chose to tell the *Daily Mail* about his betrayal in a gentle, yet devastating interview. Crucially, Ms Cockayne is never spiteful about Carling and insists that she still loves him, but matter-of-factly tells how she discovered his infidelity in a press release he was due to put out.

Any public respect that remained for Carling — who has already lost thousands from his cancelled testimonial rugby match — is now almost certain to be extinguished.

And of course there are some husbands who remain irritatingly immune despite countless revenge attacks. The rock singer Phil Collins was subjected to a blistering attack by his first wife, Andrea, who accused him of ignoring his children and communicating with them by fax. When he ditched his second wife, Gill, in another fax, it was duly leaked to the newspapers. But despite the bad publicity, Collins continues to be a hero to his adoring fans.

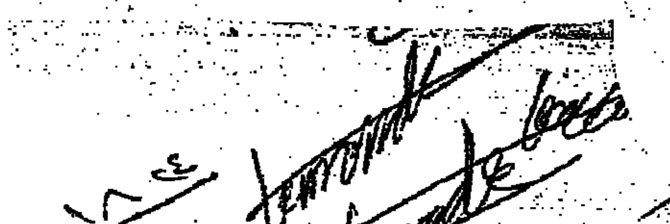
Perhaps the most famous recent example of a perfectly executed revenge was that of Fiona Duff, the PR wife of the television producer and biographer *Harry Thompson*. Mr Thompson left his wife and two children for the journalist Victoria Coren, 25.

Ms Duff chose to recount every gory detail in a newspaper article. She also delivered the ultimate bitchy coup de grâce by confiding that, when she finally came face to face with her rival, she was "a pasty-faced, spotty, greasy-haired lump".

The article gave rise to a weekly column by Ms Duff, Diary of a Divorce, in which she charted the disintegration and dismantling of a once-loving marriage.

Ms Duff knew that there were many people who thought she had gone over the top and that certain grieving should be done in private. But she answered the charge with a sentiment with which Mrs Cook may, at least for now, heartily agree.

"There are those who disapprove of what I have done, writing about my ex-husband-to-be's deception and adultery," Ms Duff said. "They can have their opinions, but I'd rather they stuffed them."



'With no regret or apology, he related a list of affairs'

BY GILLIAN HARRIS

MARGARET COOK'S STORY

FOR ten years Margaret Cook lived with the knowledge that her husband had been unfaithful. In June 1987 he chose the day when her favourite horse was put down to confirm her suspicions that he had been having an affair with a woman they both knew.

"He came and sat beside me. 'Margaret — look, I'm sorry, I'm really sorry. I think, though, since you are obviously so upset, I may as well tell you some other bad news. As you suspected, I've been having an affair,'" Mrs Cook recalled. When she recovered her composure, she asked who the woman was. Mr Cook replied impatiently: "Oh, you know very well who with."

Although the affair was not the first since the couple met as students at Edinburgh University, the relationship with the woman Mrs Cook calls Thelma was the most serious threat to the marriage until Mr Cook began seeing Gaynor Regan, his former diary secretary, who became his wife last year.



Regan: "She wouldn't let Robin end the affair"

Mrs Cook reveals that Thelma had a child about the time of her affair with Mr Cook and there was some doubt over the identity of the father. But she concludes: "I think, by now, the looks favour the husband." At the end of the affair, which Thelma allegedly finished when Mr Cook compared her mothering skills unfavourably to those of his wife, Mrs Cook noticed a change in her husband's behaviour.

"He was clearly drinking heavily and his mood was one of weary depression. I was deeply worried," she wrote.

Thelma is believed to be Celia Henderson, a riding instructor from East Lothian, who met the Cooks in the early 1980s when they developed an enthusiasm for horses: Mrs Henderson and her husband became friends with Mr and Mrs Cook until the affair, which lasted several years, came to light. Mrs Henderson was not at home yesterday. Last year, when her name was linked to the Foreign Secretary's, she said that she would never talk about her friendship with Mr Cook.

Soon after the affair ended, Mr and Mrs Cook took a weekend break in the Lake District. Over dinner one night, Mr Cook embarked on a rambling confession. "With no *hint* of regret or apology, but rather like an indulged naughty schoolboy, he related the catalogue of affairs.

"Most of them were women I did not know, or only knew by name or a voice on the telephone. They dated back to a time when I was pregnant with Peter, our second son.

"One girl from Glasgow I had labelled 'Heather Honey' because of her sugary telephone voice. Including her and Thelma, he named five women that I can recall, but apart from being drunk, I was soon sated with information and may not remember all the confession," Mrs Cook wrote.

On the final day of their holiday, with Mr Cook continuing to behave like a guilty child, his wife snapped at him to act like an adult. "I think my refusal to act out the mother role may have been one significant factor in the ultimate breakdown of our marriage."

Back in Edinburgh, Mrs Cook realised that her husband was taking sleeping pills and drinking heavily, she says. "The combination was highly detrimental and to my unbounded horror his memory began to show gaping hiatuses.

"He was not eating properly. His mood continued to be low, his wit and conversational ability vanished and I began to have doubts about his judgment. He seemed to teeter perilously on the brink of total mental and physical collapse."

They tried another holiday, taking the boys, Christopher and Peter, riding in the New Forest. One day Mr and Mrs Cook retired to a country pub. Later Mr Cook made lunch. "I was delighted," she wrote. "Perhaps this was the beginning of a recovery. Alas, later in the afternoon I found him flat out on the dining room floor with a brandy bottle."

In 1994, after the death of John Smith, the former Labour leader, Mr Cook was keen to be considered for the post. "I knew his ambition was unbounded. I did not believe, frankly, that he was the right person for the job. He had absolutely no natural courtesy or sympathy and no awareness of his lack of these qualities."

When Mr Cook realised that he lacked backbench support to stand for the leadership, Mrs Cook claims that he sank into despair. He had no empathy with the new leader, Tony Blair, and was a sworn enemy of Gordon Brown.

Eventually he gave his support to Mr Blair. "I heard Robin speaking to him on the phone and was uncomfortable to hear how deferential and almost subservient he was."

Two years later Mrs Cook discovered that her husband had begun an affair with Mrs Regan. He told his wife that he had tried to end the relationship many times, but Mrs Regan had refused to let him.

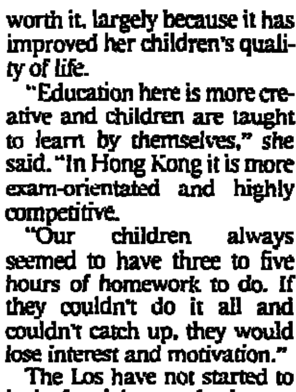
In an effort to hold the marriage together for the sake of their sons, Mrs Cook chose to stay. She did, however, end the physical side of their relationship. The affair with Mrs Regan continued until August 1997, when the *News of the World* learnt of it.

The Cooks' 28-year marriage was ended by a telephone call to Mr Cook as they travelled between terminals at Heathrow airport on their way to a three-week holiday in Montana. Alastair Campbell, the Prime Minister's press secretary, told Mr Cook to make a swift decision in the interests of "news clarity". He chose to leave his wife.



Margaret Cook and her new partner, Robin Howie, leaving their 17th-century home in Edinburgh yesterday

Milton Keynes fulfils Hong Kong dreams



MILTON KEYNES, best known until now for its concrete cows and American-style shopping malls, has become the most popular destination in Britain for people who left Hong Kong after the handover to China in 1997.

More than 1,000 families from the former colony have set up home in the Buckinghamshire city after receiving British passports under the British Nationality Act.

Founded in 1967 and set in 30 square miles of landscaped leisure space, Milton Keynes now boasts a Chinese school offering lessons taught in Cantonese every Sunday to the new arrivals and their children, a Chinese church and a Chinese community centre. Some arrivals dream of building a Chinatown in downtown Milton Keynes.

John Wong, an estate agent who was born in the former territory but who has lived in the city for 20 years, says it is no accident that so many Hong Kong Chinese have pitched up in Milton Keynes.

Many were attracted by a promotional video that circulated among Hong Kong estate agents in the run-up to the handover. Produced by the New Homes Group, a consortium of builders and land agents, it portrays a gleaming, functional city with smart family homes and a gridiron of roads in which it was impossible to get lost.

"What appealed to them most is that everything is new and clean. The newness reminds them of Hong Kong," Mr Wong said. A spokeswoman for Milton Keynes Unitary Council agreed: "Milton Keynes attracts people from all of the world because of its international feeling. It is a modern place to be."

With a population of 174,000, the city has plenty of room for growth, she added. As nobody has lived in Milton Keynes for more than 30 years, there is none of the hostility towards new arrivals that tends to arise in older English communities.

Sally Lo, 41, and her husband, Ping, 44, came to Milton Keynes with their children, Kelvin, 15, and Maggie, 9, in August 1997, a month after the handover. The couple, both teachers, were able to buy a detached family house with a garden and a garage for roughly half the price of their small flat in Hong Kong.

Although Mrs Lo reckons that food and utility bills are three times higher in Britain, she believes that the move was worth it, largely because it has improved her children's quality of life.

"Education here is more creative and children are taught to learn by themselves," she said. "In Hong Kong it is more exam-orientated and highly competitive.

"Our children always seemed to have three to five hours of homework to do. If they couldn't do it all and couldn't catch up, they would lose interest and motivation."

The Los have not started to look for jobs, preferring to spend the first couple of years living off their savings and settling down to a new way of life with their children. They realise that, as English is not their first language, they are unlikely to get professional jobs and may have to settle for factory work.

Such is the case of Henry Leung, 42, who arrived with his family in June 1997. A civil servant in Hong Kong, he works in a clothing warehouse.

His wife, Pauline, 39, had a part-time job with a council-run employment and training scheme for several months, but has given it up to spend more time with their children, Helen, 12, Harry, 10, and Harvey, 8, who attend a Roman Catholic school.

Joseph Lee, a Lutheran pastor and Chinese community leader, who came over from Hong Kong six years ago, is keen to build a Chinatown in Milton Keynes. "If you have several Chinese supermarkets in a row, they can join together to import a container of supplies from Hong Kong or China. A small shop cannot do that on its own," he said.

So far, he has been unable to raise sufficient backing from Chinese businesses to initiate the scheme. He has also met with considerable resistance from most Hong Kong residents in the city, who are more keen to integrate into the native population than to draw attention to themselves.

Mrs Leung voices a familiar opinion: "I don't want a Chinatown. I want to be more like the English, not less."

Milton Keynes's modern streets impress Chinese arrivals



MARTIN RICKETT

Barry Cox says: "If I didn't speak and sing Chinese, I'd just be a normal person, nothing special about me"

Stardom beckons the singer with a China syndrome

By Russell Jenkins

BARRY COX carries boxes of frozen dim sum, lettuces and duck in his day job working for a Chinese supermarket. In the evenings, he performs in nightclubs, crooning Hong Kong pop ballads in perfect Cantonese.

A fascination that began with martial-arts films in his youth has led to the 21-year-old white Liverpudlian steeping himself in the Chinese culture, so that he can now write, speak and sing in the notoriously difficult language. His ambition is to become internationally recognised as a Chinese pop star. For now, he is big among audiences of young and middle-aged Chinese women on Merseyside with his repertoire of Canto-pop ballads such as *Kiss Under the Moon* and *Lover Once More*, and an original song, *I think I am Chinese. I Want to be Chinese.*

"My goal is to make it big in Hong Kong," says Mr Cox, whose girlfriend is a British-born Chinese who does not speak Cantonese. He recently triumphed over more authentically Chinese competition in a singing contest sponsored by the *Chinese Society of Manchester University*. The BBC is now filming a profile of the man who is being held up as the latest consequence of cultures migrating around the world.

"If I didn't mix with Chinese and speak Chinese and sing Chinese, what would I be doing now?" he says. "I'd just be a normal person, nothing special about me."

The Chinese community is long established in the port of Liverpool. A childhood friend was Chinese and, as a teenager, Mr Cox experimented with martial arts and had a passion for the soundtracks of Jackie Chan films. He gravitated towards Chinatown. He took Cantonese classes at Liverpool's Chinese community centre, and left his job as a salesman in an electrical store to take jobs that honed his language skills.

A summer in Hong Kong staying with friends completed his education. He plans to return there this summer to make more progress his singing career. He has given himself a Chinese name, Gok Pak-wing, which means "long life", and says: "Although I know I am not Chinese, I'm trying to put myself into a Chinese body."

His mother, Valerie, said: "At first all this was a surprise to us, but he has always had Chinese friends and, in that way, became very interested in Chinese culture. It has gone from strength to strength. He works hard and people love him. It makes me proud. I know he is going to Hong Kong in the summer. He will stay for a few months and, if anything comes up, he will be staying a lot longer. Good luck to him."

However, she admits that her support does not extend to cooking Szechwan chicken and noodles when he comes in from a day's work. "I don't cook Chinese meals," says Mrs Cox. She is happy to allow her son and his girlfriend free rein in the kitchen: "She can't really understand what he says, which seems a little odd to me."

£15m trial for new campaign against speeding

By Arthur Leathley
Transport Correspondent

A TWO-YEAR trial of new measures to combat speeding is to be approved by ministers and may be extended throughout the country.

It is hoped that the £15 million campaign, with educational measures as well as tough and conspicuous checks on motorists, will reduce road casualties by a quarter. The scheme, which has been submitted to the Government by Lancashire Constabulary and the county council, is based on a scheme tested in Australia.

Each month, 450,000 vehicles in Lancashire will pass speed checks. Lancashire police say that a 25 per cent reduction in road casualties can be achieved by introducing mobile breath-testing stations, increasing the number of hand-held speed cameras, and televison advertising to press home the dangers of speeding. More resources will go to back-up staff enforcing the payment of fixed penalties.

In Victoria, 145 million speed checks were conducted in six years and more than three million speeding tickets issued. The proportion of drivers breaking the speed limit fell from 23 per cent to 1.8 per cent. Vehicles equipped with breathalysers carried out one million tests each year; drink-related fatal accidents fell by 50 per cent.

Speeding is the main cause of 1,200 road deaths in this country each year. While drink-driving deaths have fallen by more than two thirds in the past 20 years, the proportion of speed-related fatalities has risen. Transport and Home Office ministers are backing the Lancashire plan, arguing that it might save millions of pounds in medical and other costs related to accidents. Their support comes as ministers institute monitoring of forces across the country to ensure that they are doing enough to combat speeding.

Research commissioned by Lancashire police suggests that if the plan were instituted nationally, 2.5 million hospital-bed days could be freed for routine cases awaiting treatment.

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Mother's brave stand against IRA killers

Republican whose son was shot condemns 'mere thugs'

BY MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

MAUREEN KEARNEY, a 65-year-old grandmother, was in a West Belfast shopping centre last week when she spotted the man she blames for the IRA's killing of her son Andrew last July. The man was looking "happy as Larry with a trolley laden full of goods".

Mrs Kearney strode up to him and thrust a photograph of Andrew in his face. He laughed and "something just snapped", she said. She began shouting and accusing the man of murder before a large crowd of astonished onlookers. By the time she was finally led away, shaking and crying, everyone was rooting for her.

Mrs Kearney is a strong, brave woman. Though she is a staunch republican and lives in the heart of the republican Twinbrook estate, with its IRA murals and graffiti, she refuses meekly to accept the IRA's brutal brand of summary justice. At great personal risk she is waging a high-profile campaign to embarrass the IRA and bring her 33-year-old son's killers to trial.

Journalists and television crews from around the world now descend on the tiny living room that she has turned into a virtual shrine. There she explains how the IRA used to be full of idealists fighting to protect the nationalist community and win Irish unity. Now they are mostly locked up, she says, and the new breed are "mere thugs who terrorise their own community in pursuit of money and power".

Those are tough words from a woman whose father fought for the original IRA, whose brother was one of the first IRA suspects interned in 1971, and who was a cousin of the hunger striker Bobby Sands, but the facts amply support her.

In the first week of this year alone five men were shot by republican or loyalist paramilitaries, ten beaten and at least 14 exiled, according to figures released by the Belfast group Families Against Intimidation and Terror.

Last year there were 237 paramilitary beatings, or shootings and 149 families or individuals exiled. The ceasefires and the Good Friday accord may have stopped the bombs in London, but on Northern Ireland's grim estates the violence continues.

> 'I'll carry on denouncing them to my last breath, be that by natural or other means'

Mrs Kearney's son was one of 55 people killed by terrorists last year — the worst total since 1994. A fearless, outspoken man who lived for football, his "crime" was to pick fights in pubs first with the man accosted by his mother and later with the commander of the IRA's North Belfast brigade, who had beaten up a woman. He knew that he was in trouble. He had received threats. Mrs Kearney contacted a senior IRA man to plead for her son, but was told: "I'm sorry. It's out of my hands." Mr Kearney briefly fled to London, but returned because he had three children living in Belfast.

The IRA came just after midnight on Sunday, July 19. Eight men burst into his eighth-floor flat in North Belfast's New Lodge area as he was cradling his two-week-old daughter.

One man held his girlfriend, Lisa. The rest dragged him into the stairwell and shot him through both knees with a .45 revolver, severing an artery.

Before leaving, the gang cut the telephone wire and jammed the lift doors. Other IRA men were guarding the floors below, and three girls were on hand to take away the weapons. By the time that Lisa could summon help, her partner had bled to death.

The following month Mrs Kearney used her contacts to obtain a meeting with the IRA command staff and demand an explanation. Seven weeks later she received some answers.

"They were very respectful and shamefaced," she said. They apologised for the murder. They said the attack was sanctioned by the commanding officer of the Belfast brigade at the request of the North Belfast commander, but was never meant to end in her son's death. They denied that the lift was jammed, said the telephone was cut simply to ensure the attackers escaped, and claimed that the man who was supposed to call an ambulance forgot. Mrs Kearney accepts none of that.

She is still heartbroken. She removes all the clocks in her house each Saturday so she does not relive the events of that July night. Knowing her son was killed by her "own people", and merely for revenge, makes it particularly hard to bear, she said.

But she is determined to continue her campaign, despite the real danger that the IRA will silence her. "They think they are getting away with it, but not, as long as I'm alive," she said. Publicly denouncing the IRA was hard — "it's like condemning my own family" — but "I'll carry on to my last breath, be that by natural or other means". She has five other children and 17 grandchildren, so "there's plenty of us to keep it going".

Few in Mrs Kearney's terrorised community dare to back her publicly, but she says she is receiving "marvellous support" through letters, telephone calls and people approaching her in the streets. "Most people say, 'Keep on going.' I've not had one person who disagrees with what I've done."


CRISPIN RODWELL

Maureen Kearney beside the grave of her son Andrew, who bled to death after being shot by the IRA for picking fights with the wrong men

Terror calendar keeps a date with gunmen

BY MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE IRA has published a calendar showing photographs of terrorists wielding weapons on every page. A Unionist leader said that it sent a chilling new year message to the people of Northern Ireland.

Jeffrey Donaldson, the Ulster Unionist Party MP for Lagan Valley, said that the Republican Resistance Calendar for 1999 was "a sickening reminder of the potential for terror which still exists within the republican movement", despite the Good Friday accord. Ian Paisley Jnr, the Democratic Unionist Party's justice spokesman, said that the £10 calendar showed that the IRA was still an organisation of killers with no thought of peace.

The cover shows a hooded terrorist aiming a gun at the camera. Pictures for other months show terrorists brandishing AK47 assault rifles, loading rocket launchers and adopting a variety of other menacing poses.

A senior republican in West Belfast, who sent copies to friends in Boston, New York and Sydney, said yesterday: "It's a reminder to all nationalists, particularly the younger element, of what we had to live through before the first IRA ceasefire [August 1994].

"It might upset some Unionists, but they certainly don't cause offence to the people in the areas where I live and frequent. The sales have been amazing, and this sort of free publicity is bound to heighten the interest. We've probably got a bestseller on our hands."

Mr Donaldson, who had a relative murdered by the IRA, said: "I suggest that the Secretary of State [Mo Mowlam] should put a copy of this calendar on her wall as a reminder of the need for decommissioning.

"I think the calendar, along with the thinly veiled threats recently issued through *Republican News*, demonstrates that the IRA is still wedded to violence." The IRA said in its newspaper *An Phoblacht* on January 7 that there was "growing frustration" within the republican movement. It accused Unionist leaders of resurrecting preconditions that caused the collapse of its last ceasefire in 1996.

Unionists said that the IRA was threatening a return to violence unless they dropped their demand that republicans begin disarming before Sinn Fein joins Northern Ireland's Assembly.



Sales of the calendar suggest it will be a bestseller, says a senior republican in Belfast

Adams may meet Australian leader

KIM BEAZLEY, Australia's Labor Opposition leader, is willing to meet Gerry Adams next month.

The Sinn Fein president, who was once banned from the country because of the IRA's violence, has been granted a visa to begin an eight-day tour in Sydney on February 15. He will also visit Brisbane, Canberra, Melbourne and Perth. Mr Beazley said he would meet Mr Adams if invited to do so.

A spokesman for John Howard, the Prime Minister, said it was uncertain whether he would agree to talks because of Mr Adams's failure directly to condemn IRA violence, *The Sunday Age* reported.

With David Trimble, the Northern Ireland First Minister, resisting pressure to set up an executive at Stormont because of the IRA's refusal to begin decommissioning its weapons, the transfer of legislative powers to Belfast is expected to be delayed. The Assembly is due to meet again on January 18.

The IRA has insisted that there will be no disarmament, but British and Irish government demands on the republican leadership to make some sort of move are likely to intensify as Mr Adams prepares to travel to Sydney.

He said: "Like other conflict resolution processes, the international community has played a significant role in consolidating and building on the efforts that are being made to achieve a democratic peace settlement."

Call for three months of paid parental leave

Campaign group set up by Labour could embarrass minister with its views, reports **Alexandra Frean**

A NEW campaign group set up at the Government's request to help employees and employers to achieve a better balance between work and family life is threatening to become a major embarrassment to ministers.

At its official launch in London today the National Work-Life Forum, which is backed by voluntary groups and leading employers such as BT, Midland Bank and Lloyds TSB, will call on the Government to ensure that all parents are given three months' paid parental leave when they have a baby or adopt a child.

Parental leave is to be introduced in December, when Britain adopts the European Union's social chapter. Although there are rumours that the Downing Street Policy Unit is considering making one or two weeks of parental leave paid, there is no indication that the entire period will be. A consultation document on the highly contentious issue is expected in the spring.

Battle lines are being drawn between the TUC-backed Paid Parental Leave Campaign, which has the support of childcare organisations and the think-tank Demos, and the Confederation of British Industry, which has warned the Government that paid parental leave would put an "unsustainable cost on business".

Joanna Foster, chairwoman of the forum, said: "The one brave thing I want the Government to do would be to make parental leave paid. We already know from other countries ... that nobody takes it unless it is paid."

Ms Foster, a former chairwoman of the Equal Opportunities Commission, also believes that people should be able to spread out their parental leave over a year, rather than taking it in one block.

According one model worked out by Demos, under which employees, employers and the state equally share the funding of implementing paid parental leave, it would cost the Government £300 million a year to introduce. The burden on industry, however, could be up to £2.5 billion. The cost to employees would be the equivalent of an extra 0.22 per cent on their national insurance contributions.

Offsetting these costs would be enormous benefits to companies and individuals in terms of reduced stress and absenteeism. The Institute for Employment Studies has estimated that the annual cost to industry of employees taking time off to care for dependent relatives is £50 million a year.

While the National Work-Life Forum is likely to face considerable government opposition to its proposal on parental leave, it will face less resistance in other areas of its work. There is now widespread acknowledgement in government and business that the culture of long working hours puts unbearable pressure on people's health and family lives. In a recent survey, one in four managers said that they would take a pay cut and move into a less punishing job to improve their home lives.

The forum was created on the back of such research after David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, asked BT to support Ms Foster. He said that he wanted her to develop an organisation that would help women and men balance their work and family lives.

Ms Foster is determined now to help to provide practical solutions to the problem and, crucially, to ensure that it is no longer seen simply as a women's issue. "I don't think people have sorted out what role they can play in making things different. We want to help them discover what they can do about it," she said.

The forum's first conference will take place on January 19 in Glasgow. Craig Brown, the coach of the Scotland football team, will explain how he helps his players to balance their work and home lives.


ADRIAN SHERRATT

Joanna Foster: "We know from other countries that nobody takes leave unless it is paid"

Man loses leg after motorway accident

A MAN'S right leg was amputated yesterday after it was crushed between two vehicles on the hard shoulder of a motorway. He had also suffered multiple fractures to his left leg in the accident on the M60 in Greater Manchester.

It is understood that the man was trapped against a recovery vehicle after being struck by a car that had careered across the carriageway between junctions 13 and 14 near Swinton. It was not clear whether he was part of the breakdown team.

A spokesman for the Greater Manchester Ambulance Service said that the man was taken to the Hope Hospital at Salford, where surgeons amputated his leg. "There had been a road traffic incident earlier on in the morning and the breakdown vehicle was at the scene removing a car," he said.

Two men who were travelling in the car that left the carriageway sustained slight injuries in the collision, and a third man suffered severe shock. All were taken to the Hope Hospital.

The jail with a wing for the elderly

By Richard Ford, Home Correspondent

THE number of offenders serving life sentences reached a record of more than 4,000 last year, raising concerns that there could be a rapid increase in the number of elderly prisoners.

Jails in England and Wales currently hold more life prisoners than the other West European states put together, according to a report published today. One wing in a jail has already been converted into a "retirement home" for elderly inmates.

The oldest male prisoner in England and Wales is 87 and is serving a life sentence imposed in 1982 for murder. The oldest woman prisoner is 74 and is serving two months for theft.

The report found that 384 offenders were given life sentences in 1997. The figures were a record and represent an increase of 39 per cent on the average 243 people given life terms annually in the decade 1987 to 1997.

The overall figures in the report by the Prison Reform Trust show that almost 3,000 adult prisoners and young offenders are serving life for murder, more than 140 for manslaughter, more than 220 for rape, and almost 100 for arson.

Stephen Shaw, director of the trust, gave warning that changing patterns of criminal behaviour and sentencing would lead to large increases in the number of prisoners aged over 60 in the 135 jails in England and Wales.

Although many offenders grow out of crime as they mature and settle down, some recent trends suggest that they are remaining involved in criminal "careers" for much longer, and with longer jail sentences being meted out this is changing the age structure of the jail population.

Mr Shaw said: "No other country in Europe has to cope with such a large lifer population. We are rapidly following in the footsteps of the United States, where there are growing numbers of 'pensioner prisoners' serving life sentences."

The introduction of mandatory life sentences for anyone convicted a second time of rape or a serious violent offence is likely to add to the trend. Twenty-three prisoners, including Rosemary West and Myra Hindley have also been given a "whole life" sentence, meaning that they are likely to die in jail.

Prison Service statistics show that the proportion of convicted prisoners aged 60 or over rose from 1 per cent in 1990 to 1.7 per cent in 1997, when there were 80 of them. The number of prisoners aged 50 to 59 was 2,370 out of an average population of 60,000.

A wing of Kingston jail, in Portsmouth, has been converted into a unit for elderly lifers. It has ramps, sloping floors and wider corridors for wheelchairs, chairlifts and bath and toilet facilities designed for the elderly and infirm. The wing, which can house 30 men, was established for prisoners who do not require full-time nursing care. "The character was similar to that which might be found in a residential care home; many have served extremely long sentences," an inspection report of the jail said last year.

Mr Shaw said: "Kingston is an old-fashioned Victorian-style prison and one wing has been converted into what is a retirement home for prisoners. It is fitted with the requirements for people who can no longer move around much."

He said the increasing age-profile of the prison population would mean that more units would have to be similarly adapted and that this would have cost and staffing implications for the Prison Service.

English judges getting tougher

By Frances Gibb, Legal Correspondent

JUDGES from England impose some of the stiffest sentences in Europe, belying their public image of being soft on crime.

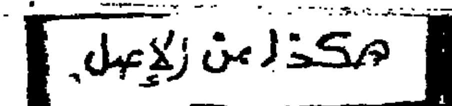
A report by the International Comparisons on Criminal Justice found that, on the most serious offences, American judges topped the hard-hitting league. But next came English judges, with those from Belgium, Scotland and Slovakia, who all favoured long sentences. Shorter sentences were favoured by judges from The Netherlands and Denmark.

Where judges had discretion to impose either a relatively short custodial sentence or a non-custodial penalty, Swedish and Dutch judges were readiest to look at alternatives to jail. Where jail was suggested, it was the British judges who suggested the longer sentences.

The findings, to be published by the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, which runs the project on International Comparisons in Criminal Justice, are based on two seminars atended by judges from the various countries.

Rob Allen, the association's director of reseach and development, said: "We carried out a similar exercise two years earlier and there has been some inflation in sentencing in this country." The report would be sent to ministers, he said.

The judges were asked what sentences they would pass in a variety of cases. In one, where a police officer working in the Aliens Registration Office had taken bribes over three years in return for permits, British judges were unanimous in considering that a jail sentence of up to three years had to be imposed, while others believed that a six-month term was adequate.



هكذا من الإهمال

Delhi vows to curb attacks on Christians

Local officials said to protect fanatics, Christopher Thomas writes

THE Indian Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, visited western India yesterday in an attempt to curb a wave of atrocities against Christians.

Repeated attacks on Christians in Gujarat, the supposedly teetotal home state of Mahatma Gandhi, appear to have been given unofficial patronage by the state government, which is run by the hardline Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The organisation, whose supporters include extremist Hindu nationalists, also heads the coalition federal Government.

In a rare move, President Narayanan, who is an "untouchable", urged Mr Vajpayee in two letters to intervene. Extremist organisations in Gujarat are particularly targeting former Hindus who converted to Christianity. "Untouchables" and low castes sometimes convert to other religions in what is invariably a futile attempt to raise their social status.

Opposition politicians in Delhi have urged President Narayanan to press for the dismissal of the Gujarat state government for failing to protect Christians. H.D. Deve Gowda, a former prime minister, called the atrocities a national shame. "It is not a law and order problem. This is an attack on a religion in an organised way."

Christian tribal members in Gujarat have been the main target, and Mr Vajpayee visited several tribal groups yesterday to try to reassure them that they would be protected. He said that anybody attacking churches would face stern punishment, as would anybody who attacked Hindu temples in reprisal. Exemplary punishment should be awarded to perpetrators of such crimes, he said in the village of Ahwa, where a Hindu group attacked a church last month.

Law and order issues are the responsibility of state governments, unless events move sufficiently out of control to mobilise the army or paramilitary forces. Social workers urged Mr Vajpayee to introduce a ban on all religious conversions.

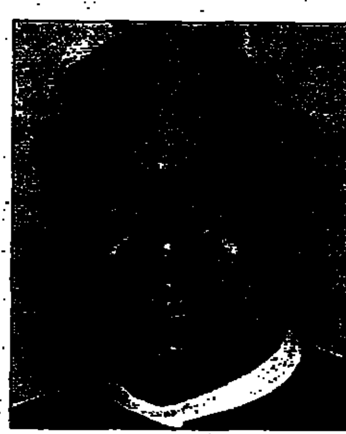
India's Constitution enshrines secularism, but the BJP and its more extremist sister parties have increasingly challenged the tradition of religious tolerance. Muslims make up 12 per cent of the population, and Christians and Sikhs are about 2 per cent.

Groups allied with the BJP have attacked churches and Christian schools in Gujarat amid allegations that Christian missionaries persuade poor, illiterate Hindus to convert in return for money or other inducements. The missionaries admit to proselytising tribal Indians, but deny offering money.

Christian missionaries generally operate in the remotest and poorest regions of India, where they carry out social work and help to improve local infrastructure. This often leads to conversions from Hinduism and, occasionally, Islam.

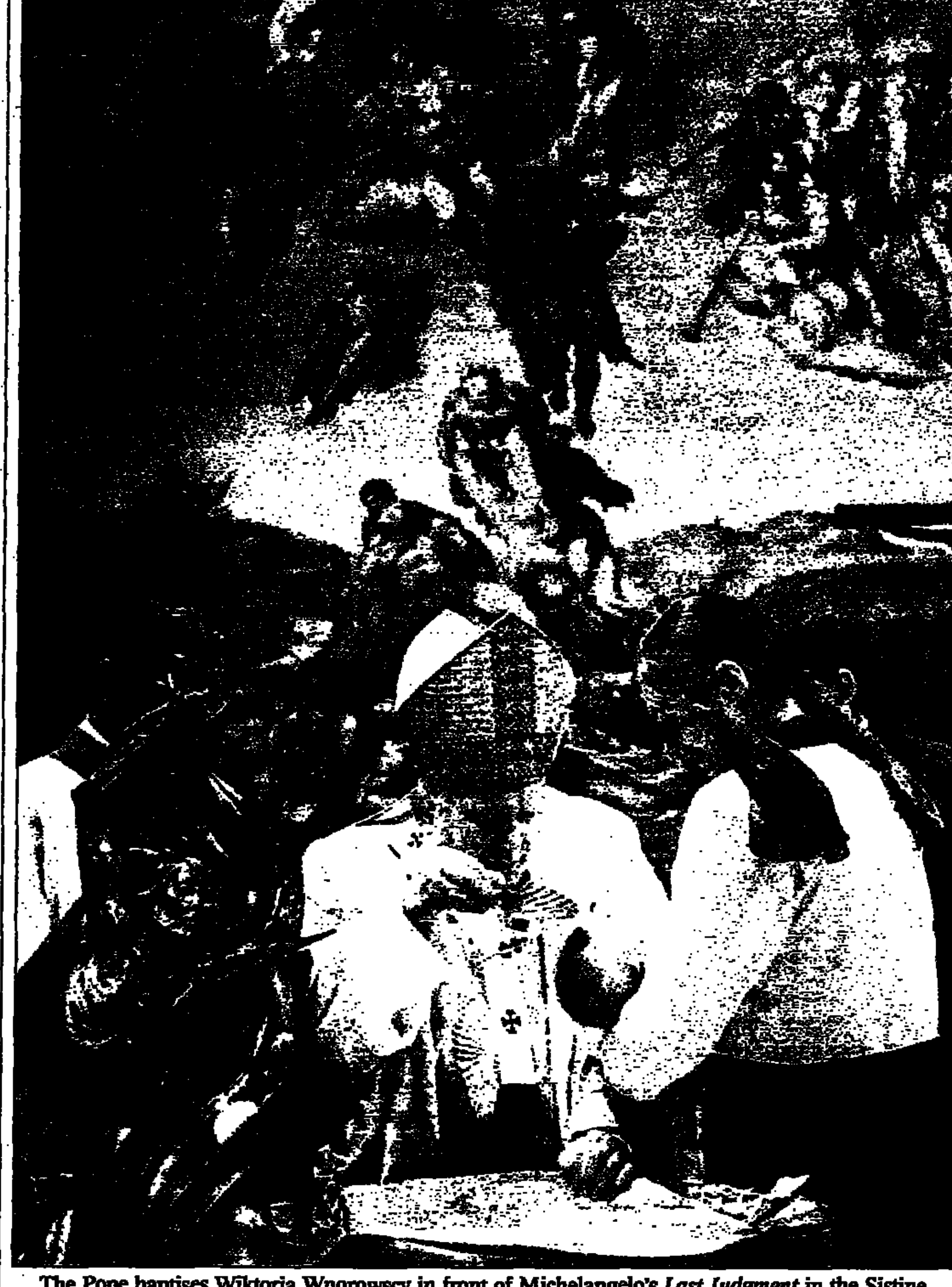
The Prime Minister's visit to Gujarat will be seen as an attempt by the BJP to tame its more extremist wings. The party came to prominence on a platform of religious extremism, but popular disgust with some of its tactics have led to a decline in support. It suffered humiliating defeats in state elections in November and is seeking to moderate its Hindu nationalist image.

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (World Hindu Council) is believed to be behind attacks on Christian targets since Christmas in Gujarat. The group is allied to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, an extremist organisation that played a pivotal role in the 1992 destruction of the Babri Mosque in the holy city of Ayodhya, arguing that it occupied the site of a destroyed temple.



Vajpayee: told tribal groups they would be protected

PUNIO LEPRI / AP



The Pope baptises Wiktoria Wnorowscy in front of Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel of the Vatican yesterday. The baby was one of 19 to be christened by the pontiff

Nigeria steps up war on Freetown rebels

By Michael Binyon
Diplomatic Editor

AS FIGHTING in Sierra Leone intensified at the weekend, Nigeria sent in fresh troops to help the beleaguered intervention force, but rebels ignored African calls for a ceasefire.

Hundreds of soldiers from Nigeria and other West African countries flew to reinforce the Nigerian-led Ecomog force, which was struggling to stem the rebel advance into the centre of the capital, Freetown. Dozens of wounded troops were evacuated to the airport outside the city, where President Kabbah has sought sanctuary.

Two journalists from the Associated Press news organisation were shot and wounded in Freetown yesterday, colleagues in the city said.

Nigerian fighter jets fired rockets into the rebel-held areas on Saturday. But yesterday, despite sporadic shellfire, fighting had died down as the rebels consolidated their hold on the eastern part of Freetown and government forces prepared a counter-attack. The centre was deserted as residents kept indoors, deprived of electricity and water and faced with dwindling food stocks. State radio urged civilians not to go outside. Smoke rose from burning buildings.

African and international attempts to stop the fighting intensified at the weekend, but Sam Bockarie, the leader of the rebel Revolutionary United Front fighting alongside the ousted junta, rejected President Kabbah's call for a ceasefire. He demanded a meeting on neutral territory with Foday Sankoh, the captured rebel leader, who is awaiting execution. Dozens of other rebels and former junta supporters have already been freed after rebel forces overran the central prison.

The Togolese and Ivory Coast foreign ministers set out for Freetown yesterday, hoping to negotiate with the President and Mr Sankoh, who is being held in a secret location.

Britain has sent the frigate *HMS Norfolk* to monitor the fighting. She is unlikely to intervene. "It's a straightforward precautionary measure to give us a ship available in that part of the world," a Defence Ministry spokesman said. "No decision has been taken yet on what, if anything, to use the *Norfolk* for."

About 50 Britons are still thought to be in the country, despite Foreign Office advice to leave.

Biko policeman faces murder charge after amnesty refused

From Sam Kiley
in Johannesburg

ONE of the alleged killers of Steve Biko, the Black Consciousness leader, has been denied amnesty by South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and faces a murder charge.

Gideon Nieuwoudt, then a police sergeant, was denied amnesty because applicants are required to make a full confession and prove political motivation. He did not admit any crime, George Bizos, the Biko family lawyer said, which disqualified him from clemency.

During the commission hearings into the death in detention 22 years ago of Biko, which sparked international outrage and inspired Lord Attenborough's film *Cry Freedom*, five policemen who applied for amnesty, including Nieuwoudt, failed to admit killing the activist. Some acknowledged that he had been chained to a metal grill, one confessed that his head had been "rammed against a wall" but all insisted that he had injured himself in a struggle with them.

Biko died after losing consciousness and being driven more than 750 miles from Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape to Pretoria as a result of the beatings handed out by Nieuwoudt and the others. He was denied medical attention throughout.

The officers say they tackled the 30-year-old Biko and accidentally slammed his head against a wall. He was then taken in a police car, naked and bleeding, and on the marathon drive lay on a blanket in the back of a Land Rover. He died on September 12, 1977, becoming one of apartheid's most famed martyrs.

Mdu Lembede, a commission spokesman, confirmed that Nieuwoudt had been denied amnesty. No ruling has been made on the amnesty applications by the four other policemen.

Right-wing whites have accused the commission of conducting a witch-hunt against members of the National Party and the security services instigated by the ruling African National Congress. But most whites have been shocked by disclosures at commission hearings of the extent and brutality of crimes committed by apartheid's "securocrats".

Nieuwoudt, who retired as a police colonel with a handsome severance package, is currently serving several life sentences for other murders.

Nieuwoudt: denied any guilt

Clinton 'did not father son of ex-prostitute'

From Bronwen Maddox in Washington

DNA tests on the 13-year-old black Arkansas boy rumoured to be President Clinton's illegitimate son have proved negative, according to reports yesterday.

"There was no match. Not even close," says *Time* magazine, quoting an unnamed source at the *Star* magazine, which said it had conducted a form of test.

The magazine paid Bobbie Ann Williams, a former prostitute who has claimed that she had sex with Mr Clinton when he was Governor of Arkansas, for blood samples of her son, Danny. The magazine is believed to have compared the results with a summary of the FBI analysis of the President's blood in the report by Kenneth Starr, the independent prosecutor.

The rumour, which has dogged Mr Clinton for years, has led to new jokes from stand-up comics that his middle name "Jefferson" is even more appropriate than it seemed. DNA analysis recently established that Thomas Jefferson, the third President and author of the Declaration of Independence, almost certainly fathered a child by one of his slaves.

The rumour is just one of a host of allegations expected to surface in the next month as a backdrop to the Senate's trial of Mr Clinton.

While senators have tripped over themselves emphasising how keen they are to avoid airing "salacious material", members of Congress are privately braced for another round of claims, from both sides of the impeachment row, providing an unwelcome soundtrack to their debate.

Larry Flynt, publisher of *Hustler* magazine, is expected today to release the names of a dozen-odd members of Congress said to have had adulterous affairs. His trawl for congressional dirt, which began with full-page press advertisements offering up to $1 million (£600,000) for information, has already claimed one victim. He helped to expose past affairs by Bob Livingston of Louisiana, who abruptly stood down from his coveted position as the next Speaker of the House.

Republican and Democratic pollsters joined at the weekend to issue a warning that however decorous the Senate trial, due to begin on Wednesday, the scandal could damage Republican prospects in the 2000 elections.

A CBS-*New York Times* poll found that a quarter of people who called themselves loyal Republican voters disapprove of the drive to impeach Mr Clinton.

This week threatens to open bitter partisan clashes in the Senate, which ended last week in a warm glow of self-congratulation for thrashing out rules for the start of the trial. Last night, leading senators revealed that the controversy over the important question of whether to call witnesses was still simmering, despite the compromise framework that was agreed on Friday.

Senator Orrin Hatch, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, said that while he could conceive, in theory, of a trial without witnesses, "in all honesty I find it hard". He attacked Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa for calling the prosecution case against the President, assembled by the House of Representatives, "a sham and a pile of dung".

The President himself is clinging doggedly to an unruffled demeanour. He spent Saturday night dining at the Sam & Harry's steakhouse with one of his jurors — Californian senator Barbara Boxer, who yesterday called for the compromise solution of censure.

William Rees-Mogg, page 20

Great snakes! Tintin the boy hero is 70

From Adam Sage in Paris



Tintin with his faithful companion Snowy in an English translation of *Tintin in the Congo* which originally appeared as a serial in a Brussels newspaper in 1930

TINTIN yesterday celebrated his seventieth birthday amid unanimous agreement in the French-speaking world on his heroic status and fierce debate over his sexuality and politics.

In a display of unashamed neo-colonialism, the Paris media devoted much newsprint and airtime to a portrayal of the Belgian cartoon character as one of their country's favourite sons. All described the "Franco-Belgian" Tintin (he was, in fact, about as French as Donald Duck) as a figure who towered above the 20th century with just one rival in the hall of fame, General Charles de Gaulle.

Yesterday, for example, *Le Journal du Dimanche*, said the adventures of "our young hero" had been translated into 58 languages, selling more than 200 million books, since he was created in Brussels by Hergé, alias Georges Remi, on January 10, 1929. Annual global sales still top one million, and, in France, 44 per cent of households have at least one of his books, the newspaper said.

The daily, *Libération*, was in even more eulogistic mood, with a three-page spread that described Tintin as a cartoon strip so great that it was worth all the others — from Disney to Asterix — put together.

French intellectuals devoted to Tintin studies were in full flow, doing their best to identify with the intrepid reporter. The philospher, Pierre Assouline, said he was "the absolute symbol of Europe. I solemnly propose here and now that he features on all euro notes".

But M Assouline was forced to admit that Tintin was "a virgin". He said: "If I was a girl, I wouldn't have wanted to go out with him."

A fuller explanation was provided by Serge Tisseron, author of the erudite tome, *Tintin Under Psychoanalysis*, who said Remi, who died in 1983, was haunted by his father's birth out of wedlock: "Tintin wants to be perfect and does not have any sexuality because he is the descendant of an unmarried mother who was herself a victim of her sexuality."

The reissue of Hergé's first collection, *Tintin in the Soviet Union*, also prompted debate, with politicians and authors arguing over their hero's "sectarian anti-communism". Although the French Communist Party announced last year that it had officially forgiven Tintin for describing the Soviet leadership as a bunch of thugs, some left-wing intellectuals still consider him an enemy.

The issue will be brought into sharp focus next month, when parliament stages a full-scale debate to determine whether Tintin was on the Right or Left of the political spectrum. Didier Quentin, a conservative, will claim that he was a Gaullist, while his Socialist colleague, Jean-Marie Blockel, will talk about Tintin's anti-colonialist adventures as proof of his left-wing credentials.

Leading article, page 21



Camera-shy celebrities put Sun Valley on the map

Aspen is out, writes Giles Whittell in Sun Valley, Idaho

IT IS not hard to grasp why Clint Eastwood prefers Sun Valley to Aspen for his winter getaways. Soon after he bought a house here a cub photographer from the local newspaper spotted him on Main Street and took his picture. When the photographer returned to his office, babbling about his scoop, his editor ripped the film from the camera, saying: "That's not how we do things here."

Clint, as the locals unselfconsciously call him, skied and mingled last week in the Sawtooth Mountains with Tom Hanks, Robin Williams, Jamie Lee Curtis and Arnold Schwarzenegger. In Aspen, 600 miles to the southeast, the biggest names were Mariah Carey and Luis Miguel, a pair of B-list pop stars.

Promoted for years as America's ultimate ski resort, Aspen is certainly its most expensive. A one-day lift pass this season costs more than $60 (£36), and a vacant one-acre residential building site facing the slopes can fetch up to $10 million. In the heart of the Rockies, it boasts direct commercial flights from Denver and Los Angeles and platoons of paparazzi at the bottom of the chairlifts every Christmas.

Not surprisingly, the real stars have gone elsewhere. Tom Cruise and Oprah Winfrey have mansions in Telluride, but the bolthole of choice for those who like their luxury and privacy in equal portions is this deceptively dopey former mining town in the middle of Idaho, a state best-known for its potatoes.

"We don't have a Chanel store in Sun Valley," said a major producer who sold his house in Aspen to buy one here and was in town last week between stints on the sets of films he is making with Demi Moore and Julia Roberts. "You can't tell anybody by how they're dressed or what they're driving, and if you tried to give a *maitre d'* extra money to get a decent table (a common Aspen tactic), she wouldn't know what you were doing."

Like Aspen, Sun Valley has felt pressures to expand and adopt the pretensions of Manhattan and West Hollywood. Unlike Aspen, it has largely resisted them. To be sure, world-class sushi is flown in daily from Seattle, and there is a fine French restaurant. Thereafter, eating out extends to hot dogs.

For a few days at a time the airstrip at Hailey becomes a parking lot for top-of-the-range Gulfstream jets, but the essential character of Sun Valley is not yet endangered. "The airport can't take anything but very small commercial planes or private ones, and it will never be expanded," one regular explained. Why not? Look what happened to Aspen.

Iraq threatens to flout 'unjust' UN resolutions

From Michael Theodoulou in Nicosia

PRESIDENT Saddam Hussein yesterday gained ostensible popular support to deepen the Gulf crisis when Iraq's rubber-stamp parliament urged his Government to reject "unjust" United Nations Security Council resolutions.

It also denounced Kuwait and Saudi Arabia as "traitors to the Arab nation" for allowing their territory to be used for British and American airstrikes against Iraq and demanded compensation from all those involved. But the 250-seat body stopped short of demanding Iraq's two Arab neighbours be punished as some deputies had urged.

But Iraqi officials cast doubt on Baghdad's recognition of a UN resolution demarcating the border with Kuwait in a move that will help London and Washington justify their military build-up in the Gulf.

The *HMS Invincible* is due to arrive at the end of the month and Tony Blair, visiting RAF pilots in Kuwait on Saturday, warned Iraq of punishment for any retaliation against last month's airstrikes.

Tariq Aziz, the Deputy Prime Minister, said Kuwait was "an entity created by Britain to weaken Iraq and deprive it of its historic coasts". He sought to justify Iraq's 1990 invasion of the emirate by repeating claims that Baghdad had been provoked by "economic aggression". Baghdad at the time accused Kuwait of stealing oil during the war between Iraq and Iran and then flooding oil markets to reduce prices and hinder Iraq's reconstruction.

One deputy said the demarcation of the border of Iraq and Kuwait, as defined by Security Council Resolution 833 which Baghdad accepted in 1994, was "savage and illegal".

Iraq's parliamentary decisions are not legally binding unless ratified by the ruling Revolutionary Command Council and Saddam. He has often used the body to endorse decisions he has made or is about to make. "He is saying to the international community: if you don't deal with me, this is what will happen," said a senior Arab envoy.

The bellicose rhetoric from Baghdad comes amid a continuing debate over whether Operation Desert Fox strengthened or weakened the Iraqi leader who seems at pains to counter Washington's claims that the airstrikes eroded his grip on power.

He has also been emboldened by revelations that the UN weapons inspectors were infiltrated by American intelligence and has insisted that they can never return to his country. Allied commanders expect more confrontations over the "no-fly" zones.

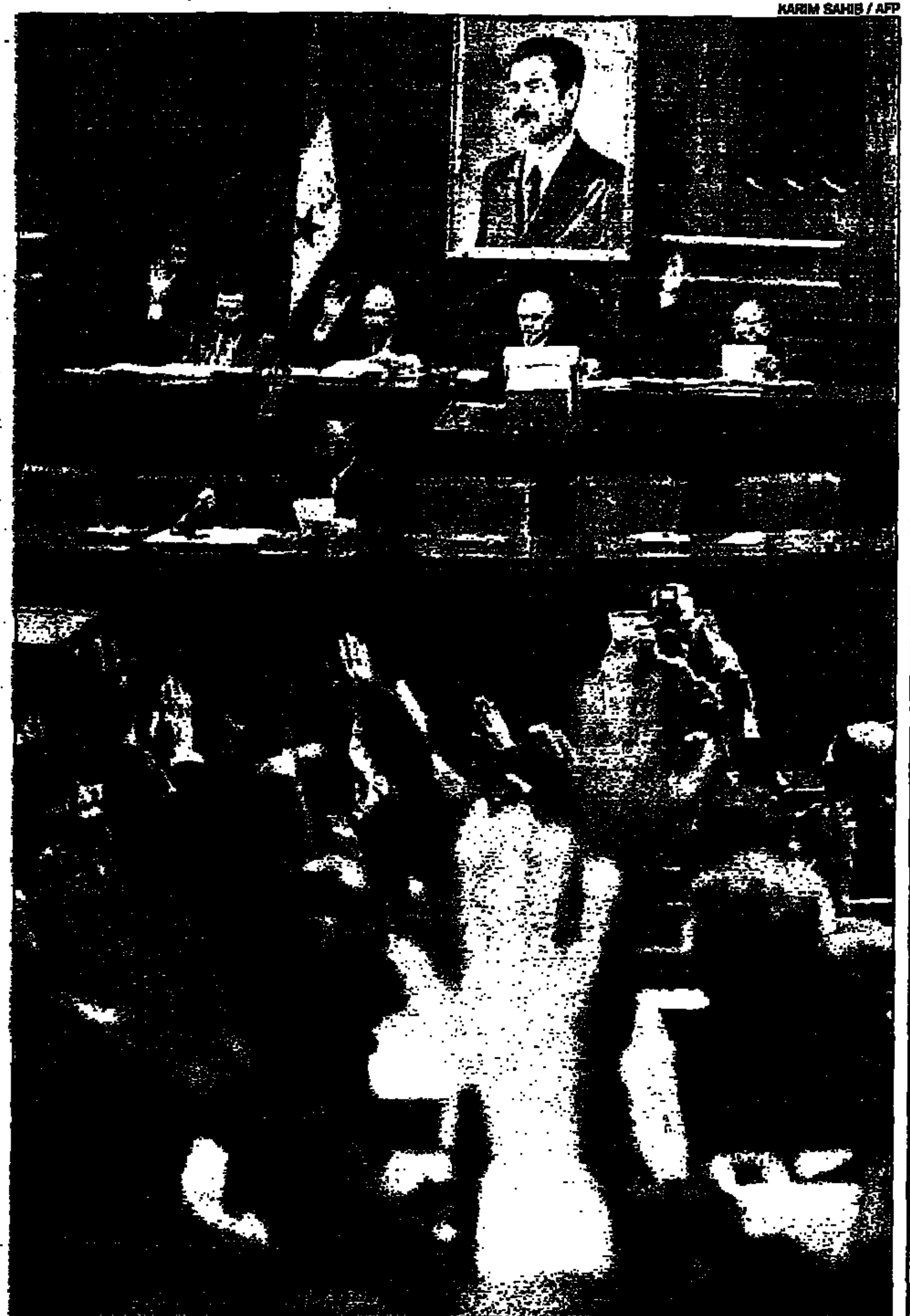
The implicit new threat against Kuwait will heighten tensions further. Saddam appears convinced that President Clinton could never muster the sort of coalition that his predecessor, George Bush, marshalled in 1990, diplomats said.

However, travellers from Baghdad said many Iraqis were convinced there would be more airstrikes when the Muslim holy month of Ramadan ends later this month.

Saddam's alienation of powerful Arab states, including Egypt, will make it far more difficult for him to capitalise on the divisions in the international community over Iraq that were highlighted by Operation Desert Fox. Iraq's parliament made clear that its strategy was to work with Arab countries to end the sanctions, which it said had "no international basis".

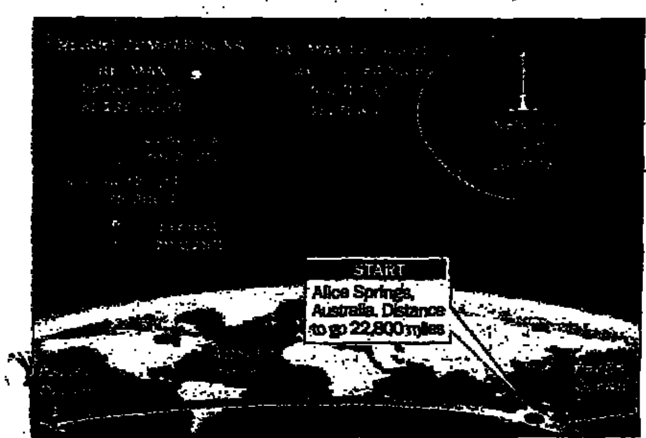
That task will be made far more difficult following Saddam's inflammatory call last week for the Arab masses to revolt against leaders who had not supported his regime in its confrontation with America and Britain.

KARIM SAHIB / AFP



The Iraqi parliament votes against recognition of UN resolutions deemed harmful

Weather forces balloonists to delay lift-off from Outback



From Roger Maynard in Sydney

THE latest attempt to fly a balloon around the world nonstop was cancelled at the last minute last night because of brewing thunderstorms.

The joint Australian-American bid to circumnavigate the globe has been dogged by strong winds since Boxing Day, when the flight was originally planned to begin.

Earlier yesterday, the organisers, Team ReMax, confirmed that if the improved weather conditions continued, the balloonists were intending to lift off soon after dawn (8.30pm GMT) from the central Australian town of Alice Springs. But as Sue Gascoigne, the team's spokeswoman, said: "It is a launch attempt, so it's still dependent on the weather."

The two-man crew, Dave Liniger, an American property tycoon, and John Wallington, the Australian ballooning champion, plan to rise to an altitude of 24 miles, where they hope stratospheric winds will carry them westwards over the southern hemisphere, and set new altitude records. They expect to complete their flight in 16 to 18 days.

Time was running out for the launch because the "weather window", the period of good weather conditions, closes at the end of this month. Frustrated by the delay, the team have had to resort to sightseeing, swimming and playing cricket to alleviate the boredom. Mr Wallington said they had not lost their good humour, which was all part of the adventure. "It's very exciting to be the first at something and this will be a significant first," he added.

The presence of the 80-strong balloon team, and the long delay, have poured thousands of Australian dollars into the local economy, with hotels and restaurants reporting record business. A launch tomorrow is still a possibility, organisers said.

NET LINKS

www.remax.com/balloon — official site of the ReMax project.
www.euronet.nl/users/jdewilde/index.html — links to hundreds of major balloon sites.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Children 'targets in war zones'

London: Children have become the deliberate targets of war, with hundreds of thousands of them actively involved in fighting and millions of others brutalised and made homeless, according to Amnesty International.

Launching a campaign to pluck children out of war zones, the rights organisation released a report highlighting some of the worst cases of abuse it found. They included children in Sri Lanka and Uganda being forced to kill one another, often dazed with alcohol and drugs. Others were massacred, mutilated, taken into slavery, or had to watch as their parents were killed. The report estimates that 300,000 children are active combatants, and 14 million are refugees. *(AFP)*

Falklands deal urged

Washington: Britain and Argentina should resolve their dispute over the Falklands, President Clinton has told an Argentine newspaper (Bronwen Maddox writes). Mr Clinton, who meets President Menem in Washington today, told *Clarin* newspaper that " we have encouraged, and will encourage, these two close friends to get over their differences and reach an agreement in this dispute". Mr Clinton called Señor Menem's visit to Britain late last year " a very positive step".

Scrap turns nasty

Istanbul: Two scrap dealers, who bought a two-tonne block of irradiated metal and tried to break it into pieces at a scrap yard here, have been hospitalised. Eight others who were exposed to the highly radioactive material, were also admitted. Six people have been charged over the deal. Yasar Ozal, of Turkey's Atomic Agency, said the metal apparently contained Cobalt 60, a heavy radioactive isotope used in some cancer therapies, and would be buried in concrete. *(AP)*

Kazakh poll 'landslide'



Moscow: Nursultan Nazarbayev, 58, right, leader of Kazakhstan since 1991, looked set to win presidential elections with a landslide, after a campaign dismissed as "grossly unfair" by Human Rights Watch (Anna Blundy writes). Mr Nazarbayev's most powerful opponent Akezhan Kazhegildin, the former Prime Minister, was disqualified on a technicality and elections were called a year early.

'Lucy ancestor' found

Addis Ababa: Fossils of an apparent human ancestor believed to be 5 million years old have been discovered in Ethiopia, according to a national newspaper. Researchers representing 13 countries found the fossils in the Awash Valley, where the 3.2 million-year-old partial skeleton of an early hominid called Lucy, and known scientifically as *Australopithecus afarensis*, was discovered in 1974. *(AP)*

Baptism of fire

Moscow: A Russian Orthodox priest accidentally set off a grenade after drunken toasts at a baptism in the village of Yaroslavl northeast of Moscow, Tass reported. He had been downing alcohol with the baby's grandmother when he handled the grenade and it went off. Both were injured. *(AFP)*

Schröder under pressure to speed up circulation of the euro





BY ROGER BOYES

The euro could be in circulation as early as next year if some German politicians get their way. The successful launch of the currency has encouraged federalist Europeans across the party spectrum to call for an acceleration of the schedule for the introduction of euro-cash.

The overall effect of such a move will be to leave Britain stranded since all the delicate calculations about how, when and if the Government is to recommend entry to European economic and monetary union (EMU) centre on 2002, when euros are supposed to become the coinage of the 11 countries that currently make up euroland. The push comes from, among others, Karl Lamers — the Christian Democrat who was most energetic in setting out the future of a hard-core Europe — and who continues to shape the European strategy of the Opposition. "People have noticed the magnificent start of the euro," he says. "Now they should have the money in their pockets. The year 2000 would be a symbolic date for starting to use euro notes."

The European Parliament deputy, Elmar Brok, agrees. "The sense of community would be boosted if one could immediately buy a gin and tonic with euros in Majorca."

Werner Hoyer, a former Europe minister in the Government of Helmut Kohl, wants Gerhard Schröder to urge his euroland counterparts to change the European treaties and permit the use of euros as a daily transaction currency by the year 2001.

The Schröder Government is listening carefully to these voices. The currency sub-committee of the European Parliament will rule in the autumn whether production capacity and logistics make realistic an early introduction of the euro. The Finance Ministry thinks the three-year transition period is necessary.

Some politicians, such as the shrewd European thinker of the Social Democrats, Norbert Wieczorek, understand that early use of euro coins would close some doors for Britain and Greece. The Schröder team likes the idea of accelerating in at least one European direction, if only to deflect from its almost certain failure to reform the system of European financing or the common agricultural policy during its six-month presidency of the EU.

The motives of the German euro accelerators are clear enough. I do not think there is a devilish German plot to put Britain into dry dock. Herr Lamers knows how slowly political integration will come about, how little can be achieved in this six-month presidency period, and how ordinary Germans will despair of the endless, detailed juggling needed to scratch back even a fraction of Germany's swollen budget contribution. If the euro is suddenly becoming popular, then the Government should fly with it, let it keep interest high, make it the driving force of integration.

But the real motivational element is that the Christian Democratic Opposition, nudged by the Bavarian Christian Social Union, could very easily adopt euro-sceptical postures. The euro is doomed to disappoint. Unemployment in Germany has just edged back over the four million mark. One dismal forecast predicts that the German economy will grow by only 1.4 per cent next year. The euro is not likely to create a jobs miracle and the mood could well turn sour.

Edmund Stoiber, the Bavarian Prime Minister, is propelling the Opposition towards the Right. He has just played his first card: an attempt to steer the conservative parties into an anti-immigration posture. A nationwide petition is to be drawn up by the opposition parties and will seek support for a move against the government initiative guaranteeing dual citizenship to many foreigners. Herr Stoiber rightly calculates that this is deeply unpopular in Germany. His second card is to be played next month, ahead of the European elections: a campaign against the European Commission and sideswipes at the euro.

The final card will be played before 2002 — a bid to be the opposition candidate for the chancellery. Herr Stoiber learnt much from Franz Josef Strauss, who never abandoned his ambitions to lead Germany. The euro and immigration are tailor-made causes for a politician trying to extend his influence. Those calling for the swift introduction of the euro are thus trying to resist the rise of Herr Stoiber and his populist conservatism.

Heads may have to roll in Brussels showdown

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

AT LEAST two European Commissioners — Edith Cresson of France and Manuel Marin of Spain — may be discredited and face serious pressure to resign in the showdown between the European Parliament and Commission.

As Jacques Santer, the Commission President, faces a censure vote in the Parliament tonight, Britain's Conservative group also wants confidence votes on four other commissioners: Erkki Liikanen (budget); Emma Bonino (humanitarian affairs), Anita Gradin (fraud investigation); and Christos Papoutsis (tourism). "Our aim is to allow Euro MPs to pinpoint those Commissioners responsible for the crisis," said James Elles, a British Conservative.

But the picture has been muddied by Pauline Green, the British leader of the Socialist bloc. She has threatened to call for a Socialist vote against the whole Commission if individual censure votes are carried.

Although Mme Cresson and Señor Marin have rejected responsibility for multimillion pound abuses in their administrations there are signs from European Union governments that some commission heads may have to roll. Wim Kok, the Dutch Prime Minister, said at the weekend that an individual commissioner could not stay in office if a simple majority voted no confidence in him or her.

The French Government is, however, backing Mme Cresson, a former Prime Minister, who is responsible for EU research spending, one area of alleged abuse. She has also been personally tainted by charges that she gave lucrative posts to an unqualified dentist friend and other close associates. Señor Marin, a Commission veteran with responsibility for huge aid spending, is singled out because of large-scale fraud in programmes under his charge and for alleged nepotism.

Along with the Commission, many MEPs have been taken aback by the ferocity of what many see as the EU's first trial of strength between its executive and its democratic assembly.

The affair has served to point a searchlight at the culture of complacency which has long coloured the Commission, the authority which acts as the EU's administrator, enforcer and sole proposer of new laws. Highly paid and beyond the reach of national authorities, members of the Commission has long operated in expatriate isolation. While the majority of its 17,000 *fonctionnaires* are honest and highly motivated civil servants, many of its managers still indulge in practices of cronyism.

The Commission's suspension of Paul van Buitenen, the Dutch auditor who blew the whistle on corruption, is seen as typical of the reflex of cover-up. Mr Santer's defiant rejection of all mismanagement charges last week only served to inflame MEPs' desire to make the Commission more accountable after years of disclosures of lax management in its handling of the £65 billion annual budget. Some senior officials have been appalled at the way that Mr Santer's private office, dominated by Luxembourgers, has panicked and thrown up a defensive wall, compounding the crisis with a high-handed stance towards the Parliament and media.

On the other side, the Parliament is hardly the model of democratic rigour. It has failed to clean up the shady practices, notably the scandalous expenses regime, that have forged its gravy-train image.

The week's events are a test for the European Parliament, which must demonstrate some coherence and avert the confusion that has marked its previous handful of attempts to confront the Commission since 1991. Senior MEPs from the big political groups hope the result will be a bloody nose for the Commission to spur it to accelerate internal reforms and accept a higher level of parliamentary scrutiny.

A CATALOGUE OF ACCUSATIONS

THE Commission is under fire for a string of affairs (Charles Bremner writes). These are the main cases. No commissioners are alleged to have profited personally.

□ Humanitarian aid: The Commission admitted last year that between 1993 and 1995 over £400 million in aid spending could not be accounted for. Manuel Marin of Spain was in charge at the time.

□ Leonardo da Vinci: Under Edith Cresson of France, this £100 million-a-year youth training programme is alleged to have been mismanaged, with contracts going to suspect agencies.

□ Nepotism: The Commission is accused of a culture of patronage and cronyism. The most glaring scandals involve Mme Cresson.

□ Group 4-Securitas: Eight commission staff are under police investigation for alleged corruption over a £10 million contract with the Belgian subsidiary of Group 4.

□ Mediterranean aid: Multimillion-pound programme suspended in 1995 after allegations of chaotic administration and abuse. Partially reinstated. Run by Señor Marin.

□ Cover-up: Critics say the Commission's fraud investigators are unwilling to pursue cases, and cover up the more damaging findings.

□ Tourism: Three people are awaiting trial for alleged bribe-taking for contracts in tourism aid.

DIDIER BAUWERAERTS / REUTERS



Paul van Buitenen, the official suspended as a whistle-blower

Killing of Bosnia suspect is defended

FROM TOM WALKER IN PRISTINA

A BRITISH spokeswoman for the Nato-led Stabilisation Force in Bosnia yesterday defended the actions of French troops who shot a war crimes suspect travelling with five children in his car.

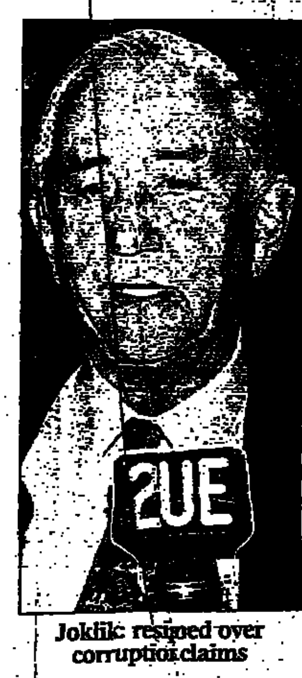
Dragan Gagovic, 38, who was accused of "ethnic cleansing" and rape by the international criminal tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, was shot dead in his car on Saturday as he tried to run over a group of French soldiers trying to arrest him. "The driver took the decision not to stop and to aim straight at the SFOR soldiers," Lieutenant Commander Sheena Thomson in Sarajevo said. "They were fully within their mandate. We regret that children's lives were in danger. It was absolutely irresponsible and reckless of Mr Gagovic."

In a separate incident, five staff of the United Nations policing mission in Bosnia were assaulted and injured by an angry crowd which surrounded their station after the death of Gagovic, the UN reported.

□ Sarajevo: The Interior Ministry of the Bosnia Muslim-Croat Federation said last night that it had issued a warrant for the arrest of the former Muslim warlord, Fikret Abdic. *(Reuters)*

Olympic officials 'bribed with sex'

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES



Joklik: resigned over corruption claims

CASH, skis, guns, scholarships — and now sex — are at the heart of mounting corruption allegations that have left the future of the Salt Lake City Winter Olympics in doubt and brought the resignations of two top officials, with more heads expected to roll.

City officials who wooed the International Olympic Committee as it considered where to hold the 2002 Winter Games used credit cards to pay for prostitutes for committee members from Africa and Latin America, according to allegations being investigated by the state Governor's office.

"I can confirm there are allegations of prostitution involving IOC members," the spokeswoman for Mike Leavitt, the Governor, said. Mr Leavitt, who has lashed out at the Salt Lake Organising Committee in recent weeks, said of the sex claim: "It would be enormously disheartening if it were true."

Reports of bribes given to IOC members in the form of guns, skis, payments of up to $70,000 (£43,000) and university scholarships worth up to $400,000 have all turned out to be true. As sex appeared to join the list, the Salt Lake committee's two senior officials, Frank Joklik and Dave Johnson, resigned on Friday.

City officials hope the resignations and the appointment of a new organising committee chairman — possibly Brent Scowcroft, the former White House National Security Adviser — will restore trust in the Games and help to bring in $250 million still to be raised to meet a target of $1.45 billion in corporate sponsorship.

The spotlight is on IOC members accused of taking bribes, including Jean-Claude Ganga, the Congo Republic's Minister of Tourism. In return for his vote in 1995, Mr Ganga is said to have received $70,000 in cash and help with a Utah land deal that last week realised a $60,000 profit for him.

Mr Ganga has refused to talk to the press. Pressure for him and up to 24 others to resign from the IOC is expected to mount before the committee's next meeting, in Lausanne on January 23.

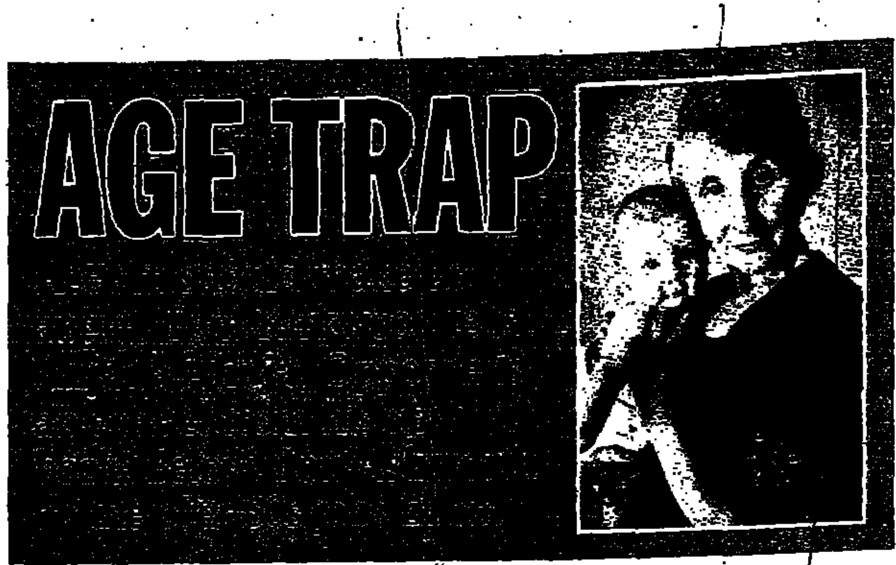
The scandal has caused a wholesale loss of innocence for America's most self-consciously upright city, the capital of a 90 per cent Mormon state where, as *Time* magazine once put it, "all they do is eat, sleep and make money".

LESSONS IN LONGEVITY

EVE ARNOLD/MAGNUM

Looking forward to a contented old age: a healthy diet and regular exercise are among the things that each of us can do to extend our lifespan

Time to



Last year, on a visit to Budapest, it suddenly struck Tom Kirkwood that he was growing old. "I was standing on the top of a hill on a beautiful clear day, looking across at the Danube," he recalls. "Suddenly I realised I had floaters, little black specks in my field of vision. Here I was, gazing at this scene of beauty and all I could think was, 'Golly, my eyesight isn't as good as it used to be, and one day I'm not going to be able to see this, and I'm not going to be able to see the people who mean so much to me'."

Kirkwood, an otherwise fit and trim 47, has more reason than most to be preoccupied by the ageing process. Professor of biological gerontology at Manchester University for the past five years, he is Britain's foremost expert on how and why we grow old.

His theory of ageing — that our bodies are designed to stay in reasonable condition only long enough to reproduce — has become a guiding principle in his field of research.

Yet, as he sets out in his liberating new book *Time of Our Lives*, an extract from which is reprinted opposite, the idea that we are expendable vehicles for reproduction does not necessarily mean that we should fall into decline after our reproductive years are over. Rather, he insists, there is much we can do to give ourselves an excellent quality of life into old age, and to extend lifespan. And just as no athletic record is seen as unbreakable, he thinks there is every chance that we will routinely live into our eighties over the coming decades.

Professor Kirkwood, who read mathematics at Cambridge and decided after graduation that he was more interested in biology, was only 27 when he had, during a bathtime Eureka moment, the "disposable soma" idea for which he is now famous (soma means "body" in Greek). There are two types of cell in the body — those connected with reproduction, and those involved in body maintenance.

There is only a limited pot of chemical energy for these cells to dip into. So there is a trade-off between reproduction and body maintenance. Evolutionary theory tells us that our purpose is to provide fit offspring, so the reproductive cells win in the trade-off. The body needs to be maintained only long enough to reproduce and look after children. Professor Kirkwood likes to think of ageing as the "interplay between sex and death".

"The theory says that you can't have it all. You can't live forever and produce lots and lots of children," he says. Such an idea, especially from a young, relatively inexperienced biologist, seemed unthinkable. Until then, scientists believed we were programmed with a "death gene" and that there was nothing science or medicine could do about ageing.

Professor Kirkwood had serious doubts about that: "Animals in the wild usually starve or are eaten before they have the chance to age, so there is no need for a death gene."

The disposable soma theory, which says that ageing is just the accumulation of small biological breakdowns, challenged this fatalism. It has come to dominate gerontology over the last 20 years because it answers the question of *why*, as well as how, we age.

Moreover, it stands up to experimental scrutiny. Professor Kirkwood and a colleague in The Netherlands completed a fascinating study recently which examined family trees among the British aristocracy stretching back to AD740. Men and women with the smallest families, which at that time meant lower fertility levels, generally lived the longest.

The idea that we are not particularly designed to last beyond our reproductive years does not dismay him: "The theory tells us that we age because our genes do not place a high priority on us living beyond about 70. But we can



Professor Tom Kirkwood

NEVER TOO OLD:

Most of us can instantly picture the interior of a B&Q superstore — row upon row of paint, hardware, kitchen units, gardening equipment and all the rest. The lighting is harsh and the air reverberates to public announcements and recycled pop music. The essence of suburban, middle-class hell, some might think.

But for many older Britons, B&Q represents salvation — in the shape of jobs, at an age when few other employers are willing to take them on. In 1989, B&Q began recruiting for two new stores — in Macclesfield and Exmouth — to be staffed entirely by over-50s, and was astonished by the response. Two open days drew more than 500 people and there were more than 600 applicants for 50 jobs. Nationally, the jobs attracted 7,000 applications.

The experiment worked so well that B&Q decided to recruit over-50s in all its stores. Macclesfield and Exmouth are no longer exclusively run by older staff, but the lessons have been used to good effect. Of 22,000 B&Q employees, about 2,750 — or 13 per cent — are over 50. A quarter of the workforce is over 40. Advantages include lower absenteeism (a problem with younger staff) and the experience which comes with age. As one B&Q shopper comments: "It's like having a friendly neighbour giving you advice." They earn about £4.30 to £5.20 an hour.

Peter Cook, 67, a DIY adviser at B&Q in Wandsworth, southwest London, could hardly be better qualified for the job — he was previously a director of George Wimpey, the housebuilder. Today, well past retirement age, Mr Cook keeps himself busy (and allows his wife some space at home) giving advice on everything from sinks to garden sheds.

He landed the job four years ago after seeing an ad on a B&Q noticeboard. "I'd been 'retired' and was terribly bored, but it was the height of recession and nobody was interested in a 60-plus civil engineer who spoke several languages. B&Q was looking for DIY advisers, and the one thing I know about is building construction."

B&Q's oldest employee, Reg Hill, 85, works in gardening at the Swindon store. Mr Cook says: "If he had stopped working, he'd be in a box by now, because the very fact that he is working keeps his mind active and it gives him objectives to achieve each day. You don't age as fast; there's absolutely no question about it."

Mr Cook earns a quarter of his former salary, but he says he doesn't feel that B&Q is exploiting its older workers. Pay is fixed in bands which are the same whether one is 18 or 85. And he believes more older people will be hired in service industries, where they are particularly good at giving advice to the public. But the more physically demanding jobs in manufacturing will mostly be closed to them.

B&Q says that its customers respond well to a mixture of ages and experience. Martin Toogood, the company's UK managing director, says: "More mature employees are likely to have a different perspective on what constitutes good customer service. We often find that they spend more time with the customers, helping them with their DIY inquiries." A B&Q spokesman

هكذا من الإعمل

LESSONS IN LONGEVITY

stop the tyranny of ageism

turn bad news into good by recognising that there is nothing in us that sets a limit to lifespan. We would be deluding ourselves if we thought there was a quick-fix around the corner. But if we can find a way of improving on what we have, we can extend lifespan and, more importantly, stay healthy for longer."

This does not mean that we can live forever — he cautions against believing such a thing — but it does mean we can continually increase the limits of longevity.

The key is to stave off the biological breakdowns, and a healthy diet, moderate exercise and not smoking, he says, is a good way to start. Professor Kirkwood, a keen runner, started following his own advice five years ago and cut down on meat — we lunch in his university office on wholemeal bread sandwiches, bananas, cereal bars and orange juice.

He sold his car two years ago; he now takes the train from his home in the Pennines, where he lives with his wife Louise and their two children.

"I walk from my house to the station, and walk from the station to the office, which takes me an hour each day. It has made a tremendous difference, because it stretches me out." However, he tempers his passion for tofu with the occasional fry-up.

As well as providing an accessible scientific picture of why we age and revealing how we can change our lives to give ourselves better health for longer, *Time of Our Lives* confronts the issue of ageism. "It is obvious as soon as you open your eyes and ears to it," he says.

"I speak to older people a lot and they feel less valued than other members of society. We should be shouting that this is not what society is about. Ageism needs to be challenged, because it is a dismissal of old people.

"Many older people manage, in spite of that, to make an effective contribution but it is not made easy enough for them. They also tend to be lumped together, but they are an extremely diverse group of people. Someone once said that we are born copies and develop into originals. Older people's life experiences make them unique."

Even on a practical level, he says, society works against the aged: "Often, when you go to catch a train, the platform is not announced until just before the train is due to leave, and there's always a scrum to get on. That makes it difficult for elderly people. In New York, there is priority boarding for young families, the old and the disabled. That does not make older people a nuisance — it just recognises that they have needs. Most of us have no idea of the physical challenges that are faced by old people in their lives." Even climbing out of an armchair, he points out, can require Olympian exertion.

He would like to see the creation of a statutory body to address ageism, which would work along the lines of the Commission for Racial Equality. He thinks that Government should create more job opportunities for older people, and give greater consideration to their needs.

"There is no point in building sheltered housing on the outskirts of towns and cities, because elderly people have limited mobility and transport is a problem. If they are in town, they can walk to the shops, which gives them exercise, and they are not cut off from society."

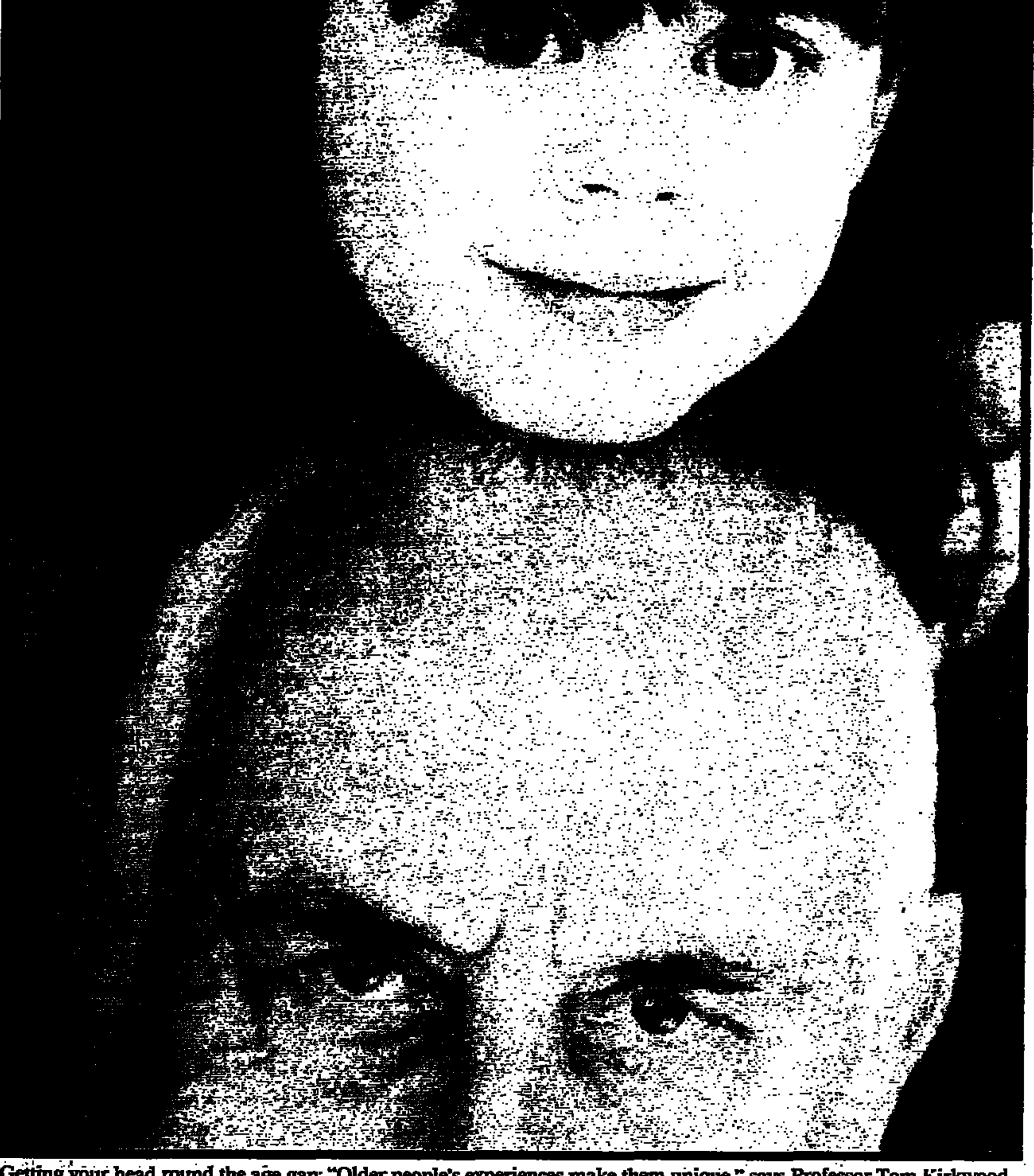
Ageism, he suggests, could stem from our reluctance to confront the realities of growing old. "There is a sense in which old people are our future. We don't want to admit that we will eventually end up like them. We are terrified of ageing, much more than we acknowledge. We know that the end point of ageing is death, which we are terrified of. We are not as familiar with death as we used to be, because people live much longer now.

"But some of the changes have a more powerful effect because we keep looking away. When you know about what's ahead, some of the terrors can be lessened. And if we face up to ageing, we can form a battle plan."

With research into such diseases as Alzheimer's, stroke, osteoporosis and age-related blindness going on, he thinks the coming decades will see us surviving longer, and in better health, than ever before.

● *Tom Kirkwood will be giving the keynote speech at a forum titled* Science, Ageing and Immortality *at the Royal Institution, Thursday, February 4, 7.30pm. Inquiries: ICA box office: 0171-930 3647.*

POWERSTOCK PHOTO LIBRARY/ZEFA



Getting your head round the age gap: "Older people's experiences make them unique," says Professor Tom Kirkwood

A LIFE-OR-DEATH DILEMMA

Ageism should make us angry, like racism and sexism. Not long ago, a tragic accident happened in which an elderly woman suffered a heart attack and died while driving her car. The car struck and killed a young mother and her daughter. "What was she doing driving at her age?" demanded the national press headlines.

Well, why not? The elderly woman was a careful driver. She had been certified fit to drive and was, as far as she knew, in good health. A vastly greater number of fatal accidents are caused by young men and women knowingly driving too fast or while drunk, by businessmen and women knowingly driving too far and falling asleep at the wheel, by drivers of all ages being distracted through talking on mobile phones, and by culpable neglect of vehicular maintenance.

A good way to test how we value people is to put ourselves in the hypothetical position of making life-or-death judgments about them. Imagine that you are the pilot of a small helicopter on a remote island from which a party of six holidaymakers has set sail in a boat equipped with a radio. You receive a mayday call to say that the boat is sinking slowly in seas too cold for survival. The boat is 20 minutes' flying time away, you can rescue only one person at a time, and no other rescuer is on hand. Those aboard cannot agree on the order in which they should be rescued, and ask you to decide for them. They will abide by your decision without question. You know that in all probability you will be unable to save all of them.

You have spent time with the holidaymakers on the island and know them all, but have no particular friendship with any of them.

Eric, 64, is the leader of the group. He worked hard in insurance after leaving school and is looking forward to retirement in a year's time, when he plans to buy a boat and sail it around the Caribbean, a lifelong dream. Eric is a bachelor and enjoys his solitary existence.

Jane, 33, has been a teacher and plans to return to work when her children, now two and four years old, begin school. The children are with their father, who is keen that Jane should have a real break from domestic chores and has taken a holiday from his job as a supermarket manager to make this possible.

Wayne, 42, is the finance officer in a workers' co-operative that was established to save the jobs of 250 metalworkers when the parent company decided to close the works down. It is largely due to Wayne's shrewd business sense that the co-operative has been a success. He has three children aged 16, 14 and 11. His wife has a well-paid job as a personnel officer in local government.

Jessie, 18, has just left school and intends to continue her studies at college after she has taken a year to "discover" herself. She has no fixed plans but knows vaguely that she would like to do "something useful".

Jeff, 25, is the owner of the boat and has never worked. He is wealthy from insurance money he received when his parents died in a plane crash ten years ago. Jeff is single, races motorbikes semi-professionally, and has frequent casual affairs. He has told you in confidence that he has two illegitimate children, for whom he pays generous but unofficial maintenance.

Constance, 78, is recently widowed. After two years devoted to the care of her husband during his slow and difficult terminal illness, she feels liberated to take up new interests. Her four grown-up children are rather horrified at her "foolhardy" decision to join this adventure holiday. Her seven grandchildren, on the other hand, are thrilled at the idea and she has been writing a diary about it for them.

Your time is up, the boat is in sight and you must give your instructions about who is first to be taken off.

Several factors probably contributed to your thoughts as you weighed one life against another. You are a decent person and have tried to be as objective and fair as possible in almost impossible circumstances. Jane, Wayne and Jeff all have dependent children. Wayne has colleagues whose livelihood he secures. Jessie has all her adult life before her. Eric and Constance deserve the new opportunities before them after lives of hard work.

> Many see placing a premium on youth as simple realism

Of the things you know about them, you are likely to take particular account of age. Age counts against Constance and Eric, and in favour of Jessie and Jeff.

Placing a premium on youth is not intrinsically ageist. Many see this as simple realism. Life insurance companies do it all the time. Newspapers feed us age data in nearly every item of news. Conventional wisdom tells us that we need this information to weigh the significance of the news. Sometimes we do. But we should be aware of the value judgments we are making, for these are slippery issues and value is in the eye of the valuer.

I am sure that, as the pilot of the helicopter, you would, if you could, have saved the lives of all six holidaymakers, regardless of the fact that Constance was old already. I know that Constance's obvious enjoyment of life would, for me, have counted in favour of her early rescue. But in terms of ageing we are all, metaphorically speaking, in sinking ships. So if we question the wisdom of extending life by fighting ageing, but not by rescuing holidaymakers from drowning, we need to agree just when and why extra life is not worth having. And, most important, we need to agree who is to decide. As a gerontologist, I am sometimes asked how long I would personally like to live. My answer is this: I want to live as long as my quality of life is good and I can look forward to each new day.

TOM KIRKWOOD

● Time of Our Lives *is published on January 28 by Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20.*

THE GREY REVOLUTION IN THE WORKPLACE

adds: "Previously, DIY was thought of as a young industry and no one considered older people as employees. It needed a shift in culture to get the idea accepted as commercially sound. When the chairman first proposed it to the board, they laughed at him. But it has widened the labour pool and brought in new social skills."

Other companies with progressive policies include Tesco, which employs 21,046 staff over the age of 50 out of a total retail workforce of 150,000. More than 1,200 of its employees are 65 or older. Tom Hopperton, 69, works as "Rollerblade assistant" at Tesco's store in Pitsea, Essex. He skates down the aisles to locate things that customers realise they have forgotten on getting to the till.

A company spokesman says: "Tesco likes to believe it operates as a meritocracy in which anyone can hold a job as long as they have talent. Tesco does not discriminate against, or in favour of, older employees, but it does believe their experience is a vital asset. They can be better at dealing with people, both customers and staff, are more committed and loyal, and are more responsible and reliable than young staff."

ICL, the computer group, rethought its policy on recruitment after losing staff to early retirement and set about winning back their lost expertise. Who better to tackle the threat of the millennium bug than the people who originally programmed the computers in the 1960s and 1970s? Choice Hotels, meanwhile, actively recruits older workers and makes a point of inviting applications from people of all ages.

The Government hopes that others will follow their lead. It has been consulting on age discrimination at work since the general election, and is soon to bring in a voluntary code.



DIY adviser Peter Cook, 67

Andrew Smith, the Employment Minister, says: "To base employment decisions on preconceived ideas about people's age, rather than on their skills and abilities, is to waste the talents of a large part of the population. In ten years, more than a quarter of the workforce will be aged over 50. That is a huge resource, for business and for the country. But it could be wasted if we do not tackle the way stereotyping based on age wrongly excludes people from jobs and training."

By 2010, nearly 40 per cent of the UK workforce will be 45 or older. Across the European Union, the number of people aged between 20 and 29 is predicted to fall by 20 per cent over the next two decades, while the number of those aged between 50 and 64 is expected to increase by 26 per cent. The Government wants to help employers to adapt to the demographic change by encouraging them to appreciate the value of older employees.

Recruiting across all age groups, so the argument goes, brings access to wider skills and experience. Companies should benefit through reduced staff turnover, increased productivity and lower absenteeism.

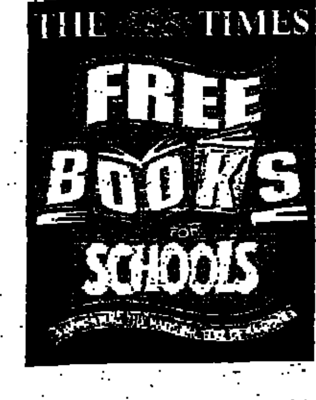
The new Government code, due to be published next month, will lay down best practice in areas such as recruitment, promotion, training and redundancy. Employers will be discouraged from specifying age limits in job advertisements, and asked to avoid restrictive phrases such as "young graduates" and "mature person". Companies will be urged to promote staff according to merit.

Jobcentres no longer accept vacancies with upper age limits. McCarthy & Stone, the retirement homes construction group, invites applications from people of all ages; many of its sales personnel are 50 or over.

John McCarthy, the chairman, says: "We need to send out a signal that hard work and commitment are the prime qualities needed to drive a business. We live in an age-obsessed culture, yet the best person for the job can be in any age range."

If the new code doesn't work then legislation may follow — although experience overseas suggests that this is unlikely. In New Zealand, for example, the existence of a statutory code proved so problematic that government departments which wanted to hire new staff had eventually to be exempted. And in France, where legislation has been brought in, employment rates for older workers remain lower than those in the UK.

JON ASHWORTH



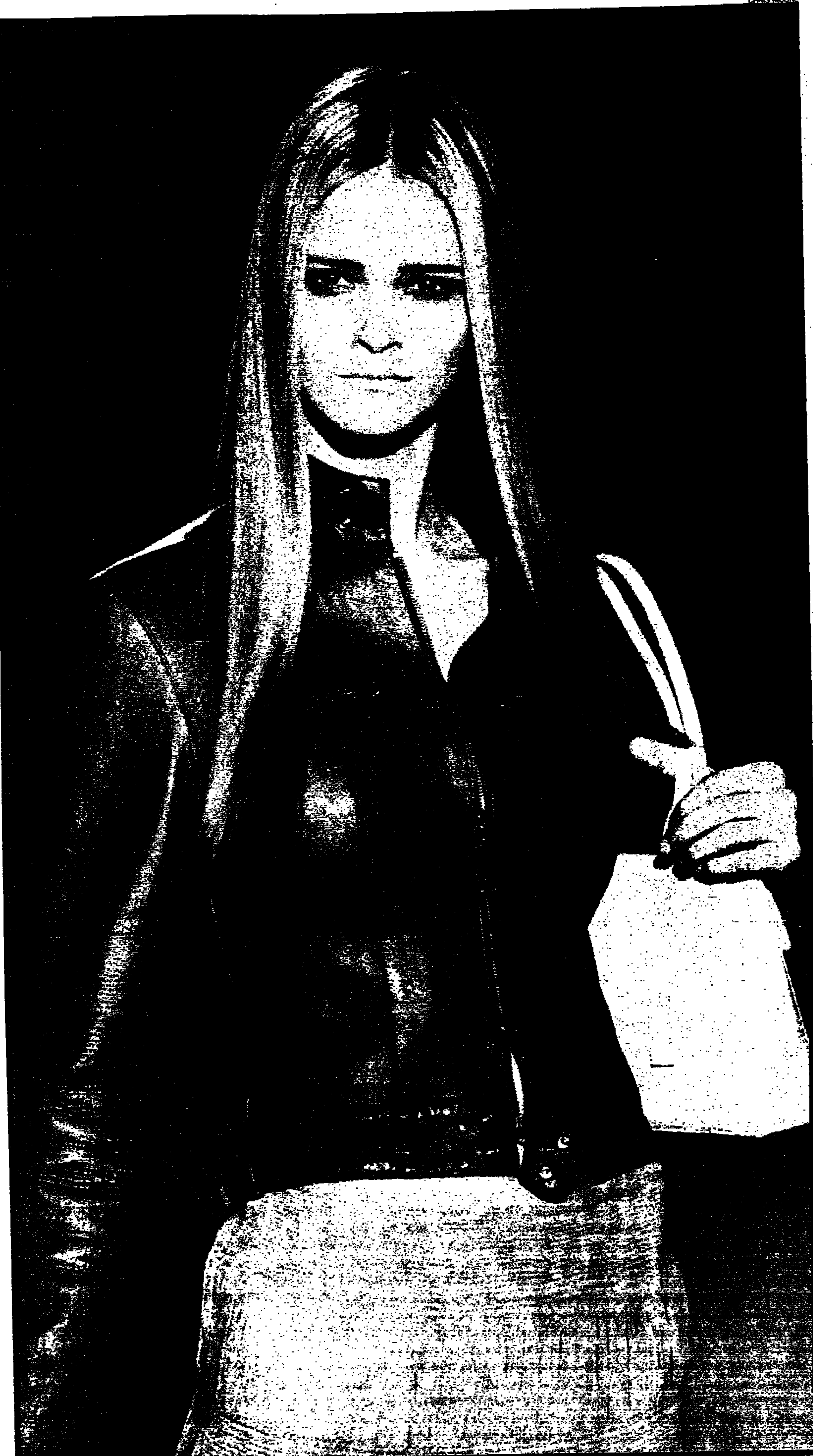
Sam Neill chooses his favourite book

When I was about 15 I read all three books of *Lord of The Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkein back to back during the long summer holiday. They overwhelmed me.

Now I read a lot of books and I always encourage my children to read, too. I love it when a book is so good that it becomes your companion for a while, and then I get sad knowing that sooner or later it's going to end.

Hippy chick hair is back, that's

CHRIS MOORE



Carmen at Gucci exemplifies the 1999 interpretation of long hair: straight, wispy and the result of many hours with a hairdryer and straightening irons

Toss that mane, straighten those curls. Suddenly it's OK to be a Seventies girl again

In the immediate excitement that greeted Tom Ford's hippy spring collection for Gucci last October, the models' hair seemed a minor footnote. But hair and make-up are never details in a business where a clever cut at the right moment can make a model's career and launch a million imitations.

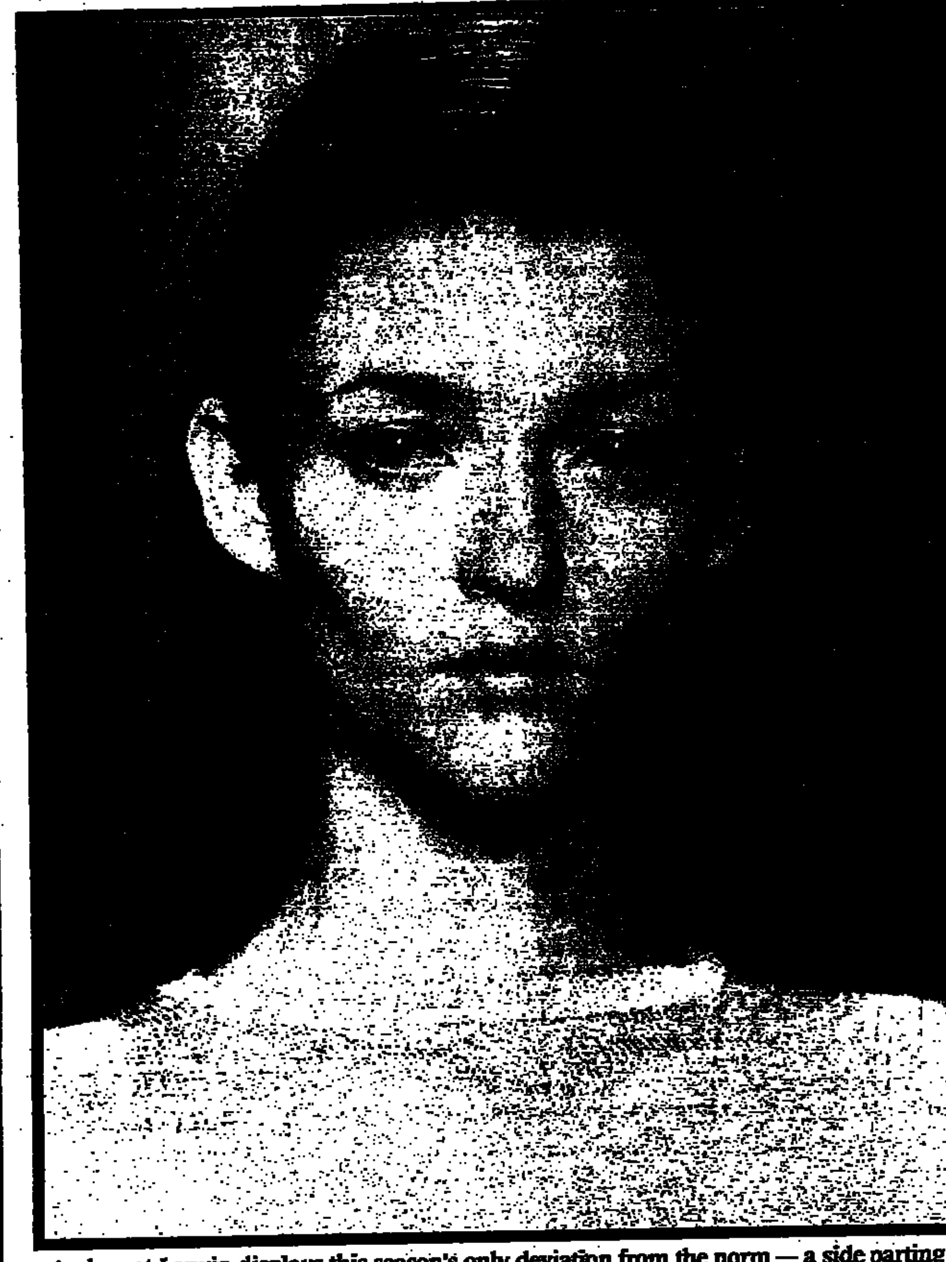
Looking back, it was clear that Ford meant his models' hair to be a statement — a very long one. Bone-straight, parted in the middle and apparently untainted by devious kinks of any kind, this was hair as we haven't seen it since Ali MacGraw tumbled in the snow with Ryan O'Neal or Cher canoodled with Sonny, hair that signalled — dramatic as it sounds — a new mood.

The following weeks saw more agonised discussions about extensions than the average town planner has to deal with in a lifetime, for long, straight locks proved ubiquitous. Wave after wave of willowy girls with hair to match floated down the catwalks — neat and glossy as a preppy's loafers at Ralph Lauren; coiled and raggedly seductive à la mermaid at Jean Paul Gaultier; unconstructed and spontaneous (ie, only one-and-a-half hours under the dryer) at TSE ... and so it went on.

The impact of so much hair after 18 months during which seemingly two thirds of the female population succumbed to some form of Gwyneth Paltrow pixie crop has been surprising. For one thing, the newness that made short so appealing, so liberating and still, in a strange way, daring, was suddenly thrown into question. The "now" models — Carmen, Audrey, Aurelie, Angela — blessed with conventional prettiness and waist-length manes, strolled down the world's catwalks with their hair flying insouciantly behind them and instantly made all those aggressive, edgy cuts and paintbox dyeing techniques seem tired and overwrought.

That said, women up and

CHRIS MOORE



Audrey at Lanvin displays this season's only deviation from the norm — a side parting

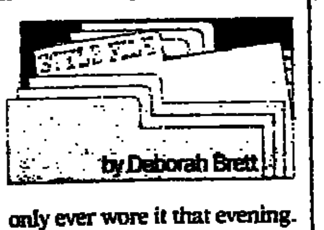
CHRIS MOORE



PIERRE VERDY



Trish Goff does Ali MacGraw at Ralph Lauren; Jean Paul Gaultier prefers mermaids



SAM NORMAN
TV presenter and journalist

Describe your personal style?
Very eclectic, predominantly black and slightly Gothic.

What period in fashion do you love?
Medieval. I love the pageantry and the heavily embroidered brocade dresses.

What accessory/ piece of clothing can you not live without?
My sunglasses. I get twitchy without them.

What are your pet hates?
I hate people who have loads of money but no style.

What is the most expensive item you have ever bought?
An Idol dress at £350. I bought it when I was pregnant to wear to the Bafta awards and I only ever wore it that evening.

What do you think of current fashion trends?
I love the greys around now, and the layered look.

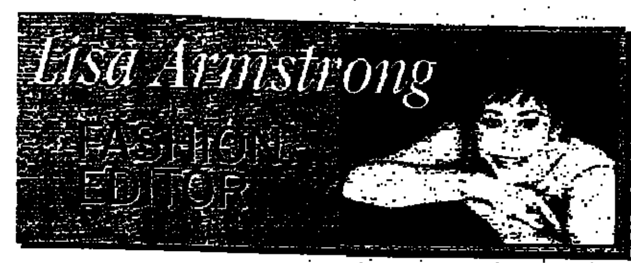
What piece of clothing would you most like to get as a gift?
A black cashmere poloneck.

What is your favourite shop?
I love French Connection and Morgan — brilliant items at affordable prices.

What is your style motto?
If you wear black you will never clash.

the long, sleek and straight of it

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: KOBAL; UNKNOWN; CAMERA PRESS; MARY EVANS; KOBAL; ALL ACTION; RONALD GRANT



down the land are unlikely to abandon their wash 'n' go urchin cuts for something that requires straightening irons, gallons of styling serum and hours under a hairdryer.

Nevertheless, something is in the air. Joel Gonçalves, the artistic director at John Frieda salons, says: "Clients are thinking about their hair in a different way. Madonna has just gone from a long, Pre-Raphaelite look to a very sleek, shiny one — and given that Hollywood's influence is so strong, that's bound to have repercussions. We are seeing a move away from bright, streaky highlights to subtler overall colour. What everyone asks for now is a healthy gloss."

There is a neat symmetry about the way that hair is going. The pretty, feminine clothes that wafted across the late Nineties fashion horizon — all those flower-trimmed cardigans, strappy high heels and gossamer skirts — were often teamed with gamine cuts. Now that clothes have taken a harder, more urban route, one that is signposted with Velcro fastenings, sports-inspired shoes and acres of nylon, hair has become whimsical, romantic, impractical and nostalgic: a case of fashion evolving with its own checks and balances in tow.

> There is something fragile-looking about long hair

At any rate, a similar partnership between soft and hard, the wistful and the relentlessly new, occurred in the late Eighties. The power-dressed go-getter who marched through the Thatcher years might have worn executive armour, but her favourite hair was voluminous, teased and long. The message, whatever she might have thought she was signifying, was that while she may have been ready for a professional catfight, she was, in her heart of hearts, a kitten.

Whether the return to long hair, at least as a catwalk ideal, represents some kind of backward step remains to be seen. As Dr Martin Skinner, a lecturer in psychology at Warwick University, remarks: "There is something emotional and fragile-looking about long hair. Short hair indicates practicality, athleticism. Long, smooth hair symbolises the antithesis of all that — a Bambi-esque passivity. It is also a talisman of youth; as women get older, their hair tends to get wirier. Long, blonde, healthy-looking hair is even more elitist, since for most adult women it simply doesn't exist. Wispiness merely adds to the whole childlike effect."

At the end of the recent film *Elizabeth*, the (not very) virginal queen is portrayed cutting off her Titian locks to mark her passage from a young, available woman to a desexualised, impersonal monarch. This may be a 20th-century interpretation, but there has always been huge importance placed, however subconsciously, on the potency of hair in maintaining the delicate balance between our notions of masculinity and femininity, youth and old age, status and the lack of it. It was not until the end of the 16th century, for instance, that the Church ceased to have any influence over the way people wore their hair (men, unless they were French kings, were required to keep it short and, implicitly, their vanity in check). Whenever there is a fashion revolution, hair turns up as chief *agent provocateur*, from the spikes of punk to the shingled bobs that accessorised the newly emancipated flapper, right back to the pious style of the Roundheads.

The fashion historian James Laver, pointing out that women's hair ballooned to cartoon proportions before the French Revolution, then became prominent again before the First World War when everyone dressed their voluminous chignons with cartwheel hats, goes so far as to suggest that hair fashions are fundamentally political. Giving so much prominence to the female head, he writes, "was not only a portent but a protest. The elaborate hairstyles were saying 'votes for women'. After a great social upheaval, women permitted themselves very small heads as a sign that some kind of victory had been won."

At the end of a century in which women's hair has flowed down to the knees, been cropped like an Eton schoolboy's and shaved to conform to the idea of the nonconformist rock star, hair remains an emotive issue, inextricably bound up with personal identity. On the most pragmatic level, it defines a person's look more than any other element of their appearance. On another, says Dr Skinner, "it defines society. Think of the tight, rigid perms of the 1950s or the let-it-all-hang-out curtain hair of the Sixties and Seventies".

It is hardly surprising that in 1989, when Linda Evangelista allowed her leonine tresses to be lopped off (spawning a wave of pre-Gwyneth pixie acolytes), she wept. In the event, the neat, head-hugging outline accentuated the eyes and mouth that had never properly been noted before and finally catapulted her into the superleague. Nor does it seem strange that whenever women (and, increasingly, men) experience trauma (ending a relationship, changing jobs), they find themselves assuming a new hairstyle as an external barometer of their new status.

Turn-of-the-millennium hair is predictably eclectic, with a premium placed on visible signs of healthiness. If volumisers were the beauty industry's sexiest profit-earner in the Eighties, products that claim to impart shine are now one of the fastest-growing sectors of a £665 million market in the UK alone.

Men, simple creatures that they are, have always secretly preferred their womenfolk to have long and (what they fondly imagine to be) natural-looking hair. And every so often, women, whatever they may claim, enjoy the idea of being pampered creatures who can lavish absurd amounts of attention on their hair — especially, perhaps, now that time is so precious.

"The reality," says Joel Gonçalves, "is that over the next few months we will probably see hair that edges a little way down the ears — maybe even as far as the shoulders." But the dream will still prove pervasive.

Straightening irons might be a form of late 20th-century torture, but the fantasy of long hair is about to appear in a magazine near you. Enjoy it while it lasts.



[illegible] copied by factory hands





1963: Julie Christie, bouffant in *Billy Liar*



1966: Jean Shrimpton's Bambi look



1970: Ali MacGraw, the perfect preppy



Rapunzel: her hair fixation started it all

Gwyneth Paltrow sets the trends

HAIR THROUGH THE AGES

[illegible]

1970s: Women of the sexual revolution [illegible] and hennaed their hair [illegible]

[illegible] along with bras

1980s: The power-suited, turbo-charged [illegible] voluminous hair [illegible]

1990s: Soft-layered and, ideally, glowing with health.

Key products: shine serums

HOW TO BE THE MANE ATTRACTION

THE top five secret agents in the quest for straight, sleek hair, whatever the length:

1 Creme Silk Groom, £15.50, by Kiehls

2 John Frieda's Frizz-Ease Hair Serum, £5.95

3 Couture Care Seal and Shine Serum, £5.99, by Jo Hansford

4 Tec Ni Art Gloss Shine Spray, £5.35, by L'Oréal

5 AC salon dryer by Charles Worthington, £22.99 — a good weight, which makes it easy to use; very powerful, so the strong airflow and not the heat dries the hair. It's chrome-plated, too, which makes it easy on the eye.

Serums, gels and sprays can add a delicate shine to long hair. Apply them before drying and use sparingly. After drying, a few drops can be added to the palm of the hand and smoothed over heat-frazzled hair. The trick is not to go too heavy on the conditioner, and to use only a few drops or a couple of sprays to avoid the hair becoming weighed down by products. The aim is to acquire a healthy sheen rather than a stringy, greasy look.

A DIY conditioner for stressed hair requires half an avocado, single cream and olive oil mixed in a blender. Apply the mixture to the whole head and then wrap in Clingfilm. Take a towel, wet it with hot water and wrap it around the head like a turban. When the towel gets cold, repeat the process another two to three times. Wash out thoroughly.



WHATEVER level of disapproval one can muster with regard to plastic surgery (and it seems to decrease with age), there is something refreshing about a celebrity who is willing to be candid about these matters. Singer Courtney Love had her breasts improved after giving birth to her daughter, and has had her nose sorted — twice.

The first occasion, she tells this month's *Allure* magazine, was when she was short of money and went to the cheapest doctor she could find. But when her career took off, she was able to have the surgery corrected. Girls once progressed from Rimmel to Helena Rubenstein when they made a bit of money. Now, it seems, they just head straight for the most fashionable plastic surgeon in town.

■ THERE is no perfect way to deal with cold feet in bed. You can turn up the heating but the rest of you often feels as if it is in a sauna. You can, of course, ignore all the protests from your partner and wear socks, but that seems antisocial. And however much designers try to spruce up hot-water bottles with cashmere or fake-fur covers, there is nothing worse than waking up clutching an ice-cold bottle in the middle of the night. But now The Cross, in Holland Park (0171-727 6760) has come up with some hand-knitted, pastel bed slippers for £16. They may not fall into the man-pleasing category, but they will at least keep *you* happy.



There is another approach — invest in a supply of gingko biloba, a rainforest product that is said to enhance circulation. Since I never remember to take vitamins regularly, I cannot personally vouch for its efficacy. But Ruth Menelotti, one of London's most sought-after beauty therapists, swears by it.

When she arrived in Britain from Trinidad two decades ago, her toes became so frostbitten in the January cold that she developed gangrene and resorted to some very strange footwear to counteract it.

Then she discovered the magical gingko — which in those days was rather *recherché*, although it is now available in Boots — and the crisis was resolved.

Since gingko biloba is also meant to stimulate the brain, presumably the more you take it, the more chance there is of you remembering to take it regularly.

■ **SPRING PREVIEW**

Shakespeare in love . . .

ARTS

. . . and the brilliant Rufus Sewell as Macbeth

Hot tickets and tips for the top

From *The Pajama Game* to *Parsifal*, from Travolta to Twyla Tharp: *Times* critics offer a selective guide to the delights of the spring season



FILM: JAMES CHRISTOPHER



America goes to war again in the epic *The Thin Red Line*



Kate Winslet, sticking to dry land in *Hideous Kinky*



Gwyneth Paltrow busy catching the Bard's eye in the movie *Shakespeare in Love*, John Madden's glittering period piece with a cast including Joseph Fiennes, Judi Dench and Antony Sher

■ BUCKLE your seatbelts. It's going to be a rough ride for anyone hoping for a quiet life in the stalls between now and April. The big movies are awash with environmental scandal, vertiginous romances, family dysfunction, political ignominy, and enough whimsy to blow Richard Branson to Mars.

First over the edge is Warren Beatty in his own film, **Bulworth** (released Jan 22). Playing a US Senator whose polls are sinking in a mud-slinging election, Beatty's Bulworth has a nervous breakdown, hires a hit man to kill him, and suddenly discovers a kamikaze freedom to tell unspeakable home truths to a bemused nation. Political mendacity is all the rage. Look at John Travolta. Having cultivated a taste for dirt in *Primary Colors*, he plays a lawyer who puts his career on the line in Steven Zaillian's **A Civil Action** (March 5). The sting here is that the story is true. Toxic chemicals dumped in the water supply of a small town near Boston have had tragic results. Talk of Oscars is coloured by talk of writs.

Family skeletons are taken in hand by Oprah Winfrey in Jonathan Demme's **Beloved** (March 5), written by Toni Morrison. Winfrey plays a struggling slave in rural Ohio, 1873, whose relationship with her daughter (Kimberly Elise) is threatened by the uneasy adoption of Thandie Newton's charismatic Beloved. Sibling rivalry also infects Anand Tucker's intriguing biopic **Hilary and Jackie** (Jan 22). Here Emily Watson's genius cellist and sister-from-hell, Jacqueline du Pré, systematically puts her older sister (Rachel Griffiths) in the shade.

This is as nothing to the comic mayhem caused by the glamorous pairing of Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman in Griffin Dunne's **Practical Magic** (Jan 22). Inheriting witching powers, these two sisters cast Viagra-strength spells on men. Kathy Bates reprises some of the mad obsession of *Misery* in Frank Coraci's rites-of-passage tale, **The Waterboy** (April 30). In **Hideous Kinky** (Feb 5) Kate Winslet plays a single mum who takes her young daughters to Morocco in search of the meaning of life. In her first film since *Titanic*, she discovers that freedom and motherhood come at a price.

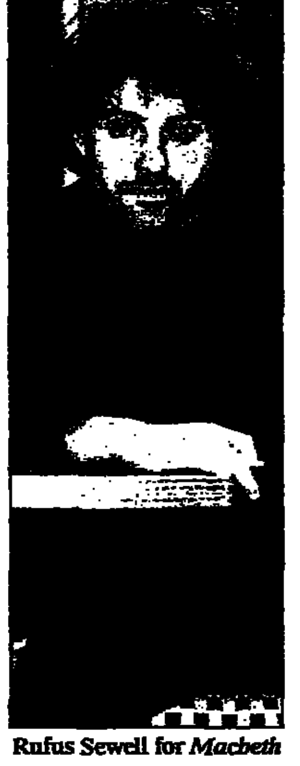
Terence Malick finally comes out of hiding to direct **The Thin Red Line** (March 5), an epic that promises to be one of the events of the year. This idiosyncratic view of the Second World War battle for Guadalcanal stars Sean Penn, Nick Nolte, Woody Harrelson and John Cusack.

On the period front, there is nothing to equal the glittering cast of John Madden's **Shakespeare in Love** (Jan 29). Joseph Fiennes plays the penniless, adulterous Bard who falls for Gwyneth Paltrow's Viola while he is writing *Romeo and Juliet*. The other towering romance of the season pairs Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan in Nora Ephron's seamless feel-good movie, **You've Got Mail** (Feb 26), an Internet version of *Pride and Prejudice* with Hanks as a business shark making a mess of e-mailing Ryan's old-fashioned shopkeeper.

THEATRE: BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

■ SPACEY, Binoche, Neeson, Kidman, Keach, McGregor: 1998 was the year when the silver screen came spilling on to the London stage, bringing glamour and even quality with it. Can 1999 match it? Maybe. With Cate Blanchett, Richard Dreyfuss, Rufus Sewell and Klaus Maria Brandauer all slated for London before the bluebells have replaced the primroses, the early signs are not discouraging.

Brandauer brings his directing as well as his formidable acting skills to a play about Hitler's pet architect, Esther Vilar's **Speer**, at the Almeida on March 9; Blanchett takes one of the great modern roles, the disillusioned ex-spy Susan Traherne, in David Hare's **Plenty** at the Islington theatre's West End home, the Albery, on April 27. The brilliant Sewell plays **Macbeth** opposite Sally Dexter at the Queen's on March 3.



Rufus Sewell for *Macbeth*

Dreyfuss surfaces at the Haymarket on March 17 in a staging of Neil Simon's raw comedy of domestic disasters, **The Prisoner of Second Avenue**. And spring should also bring the West End the admirable Geraldine McEwan in a major contribution to the Coward centenary, **Hay Fever**; Rachel Weisz in Tennessee Williams's **Suddenly Last Summer**; and **Mamma Mia!**, which brings Abba's music to a show about a wedding.

At the National Theatre you will find Trevor Nunn and John Caird's revival of Shakespeare's **Troilus and Cressida** (March 15), plus a rare staging of Bernstein's **Candide** (April 13), and a visit by Dublin's Abbey in Boucicault's melodramatic **Colleen Bawn** (March 18).

The RSC continues transferring last year's Stratford season to the Barbican Centre and the Young Vic — watch especially for C.S. Lewis's **Lion, Witch and Wardrobe** (March 18), Sher in **The Winter's Tale** (March 25) and Bernard-Marie Koltes's weird study of urban violence, **Roberto Zucco** (April 7) — and is pretty busy in Warwickshire too. Myself, I look forward with more than usual enthusiasm to seeing Josette Simon's Titania in **A Midsummer Night's Dream** (March 25), Ray Fearon and Richard McCabe in **Othello** (April 21) and, at the Swan on April 20, Tim Supple's staging of Ted Hughes's **Tales from Ovid**.

What else catches the eye? In London, C.P Taylor's shrewd tale of the Nazification of a decent man, **Good** (*Donmar, March 23*), and the hugely controversial **Le Cid** that Declan Donnellan staged in Avignon last year (Riverside, Feb 16). Out of town, McKellen's Prospero in the West Yorkshire Playhouse's **Tempest** (Feb 2); Peter Bowles in a Mobil tour of Anthony Shaffer's **Sleuth**; Fay Weldon's **The Four Alice Bakers**, plus previews of Simon Callow's revival of **The Pajama Game** (Birmingham Rep, Feb 23 and April 23); David Threlfall in **Peer Gynt** (Royal Exchange, Manchester, Feb 11); and Prunella Scales and Timothy West touring in Pinter's **Birthday Party**, opening at Salisbury Playhouse on February 18.

OPERA: RODNEY MILNES



DONALD COOPER

The Royal Opera's delightful *Paul Bunyan* is revived

■ OPERA in London might have been a little thin on the ground following the Royal Opera's slash'n'burn cancellation of its entire season, but something has been salvaged in the restoration of Francesca Zambello's delightful production of Britten's "American operetta" **Paul Bunyan**, which opens for a run at Sadler's Wells on April 23.

ENO is making the most of the gap: a new production of **Parsifal** conducted by Mark Elder, directed by Nikolaus Lehnhoff and with a cast headed by Kim Begley, Kathryn Harries and Gwynne Howell (Feb 13); Boito's **Mefistofele** in a new staging by Ian Judge (March 18); and a "controversial" production of Handel's **Semele** by Robert Carsen, conducted by Harry Bicket (April 19). There are high hopes for Raymond Gubbay's Albert Hall **Tosca**, staged by the same team as last year's outstanding *Butterfly* — David Freeman, David Roger, Peter Robinson — and with Susan Bullock and Suzanne Murphy sharing the title role (from Feb 18). Those with a nose for the out-of-the-ordinary will relish a mini-Tchaikovsky festival: the Guildhall School is performing **The Tsarina's Slippers**, his magical setting of Gogol's *Christmas Eve* (March 2), and University College Opera will mount **Mazeppa** at the Bloomsbury on March 22. On March 31 Broomhill Opera will stage Weill's **Silbersee** in its new east London home, Wilton's Music Hall, in a translation by Rory Bremner.

Both the Welsh National and Scottish Opera are leading from strength. In Cardiff, Peter Stein's new production of **Peter Grimes**, conducted by Carlo Rizzi, opens February 15 with John Daszak in the title role. Richard Jones's staging of **Hansel and Gretel**, so far performed only twice but seen by millions on TV, comes back into the Welsh repertory (Feb 26), joined by the late Göran Järvefelt's popular version of **La Bohème** (Feb 25).

In Glasgow there's a hugely inviting new production of **Der Rosenkavalier**, conducted by Richard Armstrong, directed by David McVicar, and with Joan Rodgers and Peter Rose as the antagonists (Feb 6), and Armstrong is also in charge of the first performance in these islands ofDelius's **The Magic Fountain**, a characteristically exotic fantasy set amid the Indians of Florida (Feb 20) — two not-to-be-missed shows.

From next Friday Opera North will revive and tour Martin Duncan's production of Rossini's **Thieving Magpie**, with Mary Hegarty as the heroine, and on April 27 the company revives Simon Holt's Lorca opera, **The Nightingale's to Blame**, premiered last year in Huddersfield — a worthy piece difficult to bring off. And don't forget English Touring Opera, currently on a high: its spring tour is launched with Robert Chevara's new production of Macbeth at the Cambridge Arts Theatre on February 24.

Monet fever at the Royal Academy . . .

ARTS

■ SPRING PREVIEW
. . . and a dancing Don Juan

Pollock for your pleasure



An untitled 1945 work by Jackson Pollock. The Tate Gallery's large retrospective of painting by "Jack the Dripper" is likely to be the most explosive show of the season

VISUAL ART: RICHARD CORK

■ TO JUDGE by the stampede to buy advance tickets, **Monet in the 20th Century** at the Royal Academy is set to become the new year's most popular art show (Jan 23-April 18). Impressionism retains its overwhelming popularity, and Monet is the most-loved member of the movement. The British fascination with gardens provides another reason why this exhibition might well be an all-time record-breaker — for the survey concentrates on his latter years, when Monet grew obsessed with painting the flower-beds, water-lilies and weeping willows he had planted at his home in Giverny.

A far more severe and classical French painter is reassessed in the National Gallery's **Portraits by Ingres** exhibition (Jan 27-April 25). But the show should be a revelation. Long neglected, especially by those who compared him unfavourably with his arch-rival Delacroix, Ingres is a supreme portraitist. Equally at ease with men and women, he is a master of design. But he can be deeply sensual as well, and his inventive originality ensured that he later found devotees even among Modernists as revolutionary as Picasso.

Living artists will not be neglected in the months ahead. **Andreas Gursky**, one of the most brilliant and unsettling photographers at work today, will be examined at the Serpentine Gallery (Jan 21-March 7). **Steve McQueen**, among the most impressive of young British artists, is having his first major British show of films and sculpture at the ICA (Jan 29-March 21). **Yinka Shonibare**, a witty and subversive contributor to the *Sensation* exhibition, receives a substantial airing at the Ikon Gallery in Birmingham (Feb 10-April 5). And **Richard Deacon**, an outstanding middle-generation sculptor, is celebrated by the Tate Gallery Liverpool in a show of recent work never before seen in Britain (Feb 20-May 16).

Patrick Caulfield, among the finest and most consistently rewarding of our senior painters, will emblazon the Hayward Gallery with a much-deserved retrospective (Feb 4-April 11). Ranging over the whole of his tenacious 40-year career, the Caulfield show could easily win his cool explorations of urban interiors an even wider range of admirers.

Yet another facet of **Picasso's** seemingly limitless achievements will be revealed at the Barbican Art Gallery (Jan 29-March 28). Since he was fascinated by the camera's possibilities, and left behind more than 17,000 photographic works, it is surprising that no show has fully investigated his contribution to photography until now. The Barbican rectifies this omission and promises to offer a host of fresh insights into his inexhaustible creative process.

The most explosive show of the season, though, will surely be **Jackson Pollock** at the Tate Gallery (March 11-June 6). Despite his legendary reputation as the hard-drinking, short-lived innovator of dripped and spattered paint, Pollock has not been seen at full stretch in Britain for more than 40 years. So this survey, the sole European airing for the major retrospective recently displayed at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, might generate high excitement. Spectacular loans from across the world will ensure that "Jack the Dripper" is seen at his wild, orgiastic best. Not to be missed.

DANCE: DEBRA CRAINE

■ NOW no longer a full-time member of the Royal Ballet, **Irek Mukhamedov** stars in a new touring production for Arc Dance Company by Kim Brandstrup, *The Return of Don Juan* (March 1, Sadler's Wells). Mukhamedov plays the infamous philanderer, catapulted out of Hell and into a modern-day film studio where he is on a mission to seduce the last unseducible woman on earth. The Danish composer Kim Helweg provides an original score.

The **Royal Ballet** is preparing for its annual Dance Bites tour which this year features new works by Mark Baldwin, Michael Corder, Cathy Marston and William Tuckett. Two simultaneous tours open on March 1, one in Darlington (Civic Theatre), the other in Bath (Theatre Royal).

As its contribution to the Towards the Millennium festival, **Birmingham Royal Ballet** performs a triple bill (Sadler's Wells Feb 10, Birmingham Hippodrome March 3) which celebrates the Eighties. The programme brings together David Bintley's *Choros*, inspired by Ancient Greek dances, and his *Still Life at the Penguin Café*, a "veritable ecological extravaganza", with Twyla Tharp's exhilarating *In the Upper Room*. Performed by dancers in trainers and pointe shoes, this American masterpiece of momentum and energy is set to Philip Glass's popular minimalist score.

German dancemaker **Pina Bausch** returns to London for the first time in 17 years when she brings her Tanztheater Wuppertal to Sadler's Wells (Jan 27). She presents *Viktor*, an emotional rollercoaster of dance-theatre performed in front of a 24-foot earthwork. Sadler's Wells plays host to another foreign visitor when **Pacific Northwest Ballet** from Seattle comes to London (Feb 22-27) with Balanchine's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and a mixed bill of US choreographers.

When Derek Deane staged *Romeo and Juliet* in the round at the Albert Hall in June 1998 he went to town, utilising more than 120 performers. He is now reviving that production for **English National Ballet's** spring tour, downscaling it for a company of 64. It opens at the Mayflower, Southampton (March 1-6) before moving to Manchester (Palace, March 8) and Oxford (Apollo, March 15).

Northern Ballet Theatre unveils its new full-length *Carmen* at the Grand in Leeds on February 22. Choreographed by Didy Veldman, and based on a scenario by the late Christopher Gable, it sets the familiar tale in the "dark underworld of contemporary Latin America".

KRISTYNA KASHUILI



Irek Mukhamedov will star in a new touring ballet by Kim Brandstrup about Don Juan

MUSIC: RICHARD MORRISON

■ THE eternal quest for street cred leads orchestras into dangerous liaisons this spring. The **London Philharmonic** presents a day of "Roots/Classical Fusions" (Festival Hall, Feb 6), when it collaborates with an African choir, an early-music group and a Turkish folk flautist. In Manchester the **Hallé Orchestra** also walks on the (slightly) wild side, premiering Errollyn Wallen's saxophone concerto for Courtney Pine (Bridgewater Hall, March 25). And even the period-instrument **Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment** takes part in a wacky venture (Barbican, April 6) in which the radical American theatre director Peter Sellers will apparently "breathe new life" into three Bach cantatas. What larks.

Elsewhere, there are birthday bashes. **André Previn** celebrates his 70th (yes, even whizzkids grow wrinkly) by returning to his old LSO mates for three concerts (Barbican, March 7-15). An even greater figure, **Goethe**, has his 250th birthday marked by the fine Corydon Singers (St John's Smith Square, Jan 22) and by a weekend of events (March 6-7) at the South Bank in London.

Galina Ustvolskaya, the mysterious Russian composer admired (and, it is said, proposed to) by Shostakovich, comes out of the cold when the Royal Academy of Music in London mounts a festival (Jan 26-29) celebrating her 80th birthday. At last we can judge whether her talent justifies the claims made on her behalf. And **Olivier Messiaen's** widow, Yvonne Loriod, takes part in the BBC Symphony Orchestra's festival (Barbican, this weekend) devoted to the Frenchman's exotic and ecstatic paeans.

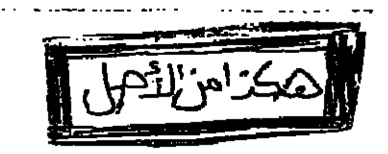


Rostropovich: triple echo

The University of Cambridge, meanwhile, hangs out the bunting for **Alexander Goehr**, who retires as professor of music after 23 years. A festival throughout the spring term features his music and that of his many distinguished pupils. And the Lahti Symphony Orchestra from Finland makes its UK debut with a fascinating **Sibelius** weekend (Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Feb 27-28), including the British premiere of his Violin Concerto in its original version.

Finally, two epics and an oddity. Simon Rattle's ten-year **Towards the Millennium** project reaches the 1980s, which means loads of Lutoslawski and Birtwistle, as well as another outing for the longest continuous orchestral piece in history: Nicholas Maw's 90-minute *Odyssey* (Birmingham and London, throughout March). **Mstislav Rostropovich** revives memories of prodigious deeds of yore when he plays no fewer than three solo works with the LSO in one sitting, including a new Sofia Gubaidulina piece (this Wednesday, Barbican).

And, for music-lovers who think they have heard it all, the "world premiere concert programme" on a left-handed piano takes place at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on February 11. A sinister development, you might say.



Blairism at a turning point

Tony Blair wants us to judge him and his Government on performance, not personalities. Fair enough. That is probably how voters will anyway judge him in two to three years, when recent lurid headlines will have been long forgotten. But Mr Blair's test is much more demanding than it appears. The main doubt about new Labour has always been its ability to deliver in office.

Of course, claims (exaggerated or real) about Cabinet infighting, about spin-doctors and about the private lives of ministers are damaging. Mr Blair has to be careful, not least in keeping a public distance for some time from Peter Mandelson, in both their interests. But the significance of these feverish stories is vastly exaggerated. The Tories understandably see an opportunity to get their own back for many unfair and over-the-top criticisms they suffered. But such allegations do not decide the fate of governments.

The striking feature of the latest polls is how little impact the Mandelson affair has had on public opinion, not how much. The ratings of Mr Blair and Labour are still much higher than at the last election, and higher than for any previous government after 20 months in office. Moreover, any movement has been from Labour to the Liberal Democrats, rather than to the Tories. This suggests a mini-protest, rather than any fundamental shift in opinion.

Mr Blair obviously has to demonstrate that the Government has not lost its way and that his senior colleagues can work together. That should be relatively straightforward in the short term. The Cabinet is broadly agreed on the thrust of policy. No one serious is arguing for a change of approach, least of all John Prescott. A batch of new (and reheated) initiatives last week on numeracy in schools, fighting burglary and employment is intended to show the new Labour character of the Government.

Peter Riddell

The key question is about delivery. New Labour's main flaw has been its lack of rigour on policy making. Pre-election caution, to avoid charges of higher spending and taxes, meant that there was not enough serious thought about how to improve services. Instead, there were the five pledges. As Philip Gould reveals in *The Unfinished Revolution*, these were essentially campaigning devices which emerged from testing by focus groups of swing voters. However effective in electoral terms, the more specific ones, on NHS waiting lists and class sizes, were misguided. Almost no one except Frank Dobson and a couple of Blairite advisers believes the pledge on waiting lists is good health policy. It has distorted the allocation of resources, and along with serious weaknesses in nurse training and retention inherited from the Tories, has contributed to serious problems in hospitals. But the pledge has to be achieved before it can be abandoned, or modified.

In other areas, the Government has had to recognise that it will have to challenge vested — and often Labour-supporting — interests if it is to deliver improved services. I wonder how many Labour MPs understand or accept the implications of Mr Blair's remark yesterday in his *Breakfast With Frost* interview that neither teaching unions nor local education authorities could be allowed to decide education policy. That was reflected in David Blunkett's announcement on Friday about intervening to hand over the running of schools in failing local authorities to outsiders, including private-sector bodies. While there are obvious dangers of excessive centralisation, the Government is likely to have to go further with the next round of education action zones and in allowing more competition locally in setting up schools.

These initiatives require a sufficient number of ministers committed to a new Labour approach. For all Mr Blair's claims that the recent reshuffle promoted new Labour supporters, questions remain about how many are really willing to take political risks. Mr Mandelson mattered not just because of his closeness to Mr Blair but also because of his rare willingness to use new Labour language about business and free markets. That is why there was such glee over his resignation among old Labour stalwarts. By contrast, Gordon Brown has often presented his new Labour economic policies in old Labour terms. Mr Blair now has to spend more time building up a new Labour cadre, as well as consulting more with sympathetic ministers on the Centre-Right who have tended to be ignored. It will be interesting to see if the length of Cabinet meetings expands much beyond the 38-minute average recorded at one point last year.

Mr Blair will have to move more carefully now over the realignment of the Centre-Left which he has championed almost alone in the Cabinet, apart from Mr Mandelson. However, this was already in danger of stalling before the latter's resignation. Many ministers are hostile both to the Jenkins report on electoral reform and to closer collaboration with the Liberal Democrats.

Mr Blair kept co-operation alive yesterday by stressing his ideological closeness to Paddy Ashdown's Liberal Democrats, but don't expect any big leaps forward. Mr Blair and Mr Ashdown are both constrained by their parties.

The most intriguing area for a bold initiative is Europe. Mr Blair yesterday again emphasised the importance for Britain both of the euro being successful and of closer relations with the European Union. The launch of the euro has increased pressures on him to make explicit his private belief that it is now a question of when and how, not if, Britain joins. Such a public declaration is necessary to persuade business to prepare and to win over the public.

The challenge for Mr Blair is whether, like Margaret Thatcher in 1981, he responds to adversity and setbacks by being more radical. He has no real choice. If Mr Blair is to meet the test he has set himself of being judged at the next general election on promises delivered on schools, hospitals, crime, the economy, welfare and Europe, he has to be bolder. Blairism is at a turning point.

peter.riddell@the-times.co.uk



MARGARET COOK: A SLIGHT & DELICATE CREATURE

Boys will always be boys

Both Cook and Clinton show an innate childishness that could only end in tears

Yesterday morning I had planned to write about President Clinton and impeachment; then the Margaret Cook memoirs were published. After a brief discussion with the office, I switched to that. I had already read the story on the front pages of the Sunday papers, and had listened to the early comment on *Breakfast With Frost*. I turned to the pages of serialisation in *The Sunday Times News Review*. It was then that I realised the remarkable parallels between the Clinton and the Cook stories.

The most striking is the similarity of the psychological drama. Cast both stories as novels, and ask what is the core of the plot. A mature woman is married to a man who is a perpetual adolescent; he is clever, and good with words, but lacks a sense of self-worth, and relieves his depression with recurrent affairs of varying importance. He finds his wife's strength and maturity both reassuring and threatening. The affairs offer him an escape into guilt-free, because disposable, relationships.

The wife enjoys the success of the husband's career, and the vicarious prestige of his life. She knows he can never be "cured" of his immaturity or his depressive temperament. She sees that his cleverness, particularly with words, is only that, that he is a mouth not a brain, that he has difficulty in maintaining real relationships. She suspects it will all end in tears, perhaps in disgrace. Nevertheless, she is bound to her husband by the feeling that he needs mothering, and by compassion for his pain.

In Margaret Cook's case, the husband rejected her, and decided to marry one of his succession of lovers, partly as a political calculation. The key decision seems to have been made in a telephone conversation with the Prime Minister. If that had gone the other way, Margaret Cook would have stayed; she still feels love for her former husband, even if it only fuels her anger at his betrayal. In Hillary's case, the political decision went the other way; despite her equal sense of betrayal, she sticks with her husband and has become his final protectress. If she left, it would be all over for him.

By a coincidence, the two men have been left in the same political position, that of a lame duck, still in office, but for only a limited period of declining power. Robin Cook is safe because Peter Mandelson has gone. Tony Blair, a good-natured man but one who calculates the odds as carefully as Sky Masterson, cannot afford to lose two senior ministers in one month. This security is, however, temporary. Mr Cook is now an embarrassment not an asset to the Government; at the next reshuffle, or the one after, he will be dropped, and nobody imagines that he will ever hold office again.

It is the same with Bill Clinton. He may, or may not, survive the impeachment proceedings before the Senate. If he does, he will struggle through another couple of years as a discredited President, without reputation and with little political weight. Both men know that history will be unkind to them, though the scale is different. It is one thing to have been President of the United States, and another to have been the British Foreign Secretary for two or three years. Of course, failure is more bitter in the greater office.

William Rees-Mogg

On *Breakfast With Frost*, Tony Blair said something to the effect that Robin Cook was the most admired British Foreign Secretary in Europe "for many years". In my experience that is not true. The European view, so far as I have met it, is that Tony Blair himself, Peter Mandelson and Gordon Brown have been the three most influential ministers in terms of European affairs. Robin Cook is regarded as a competent Foreign Office spokesman, but with less political weight than most European Foreign Ministers enjoy. He is seen as sharing much the same standing as Malcolm Rifkind, another Scottish debator, though a better-balanced personality. The last British Foreign Secretary to be widely admired in Europe was Douglas Hurd. He was thought to have personal authority and seriousness; it is not "many years" since he retired.

Outside Europe, Robin Cook has made a number of minor blunders: when the Queen was touring India, over involvement in Sierra Leone, on his visit to Israel. Margaret Cook says that he lacked sensitivity, which one certainly could not say of Bill Clinton. Robin Cook's greatest political gift was his aggressiveness in Opposition, but this is no help at the Foreign Office. Diplomacy calls for the ability to establish friendly relationships, and avoid giving offence. Robin Cook is no diplomat.

Margaret Cook shows a good deal of self-pity, for which one cannot blame her. Hillary would be entitled to self-pity as well, and probably feels it from time to time. Some of it is bound to emerge when her memoirs are published. Yet the paradox is that one comes away from reading the extracts in *The Sunday Times* feeling some pity for Margaret but even greater pity for Robin. It is not only that his ambitions are dribbling away, like a petrol can punctured by a bullet in some desert war. That is sad enough. It is not only that the book is written to shame him, and succeeds in its aim only too well. It is that every sentence shows that Margaret is strong, as grown-up women can be strong, and Robin is weak, as immature men can be weak. Fairly or unfairly, we feel pity for the weak, even when they prove venomous, more than for the strong.

In the past week I had been wrestling with this problem of compassion in its most extreme form. I was thinking partly about Clinton, about his psychological emptiness, about his traumatic childhood with the devoted but dysfunctional mother and an alcoholic stepfather. I happened also to be reading the opening chapters of Ian Kershaw's fascinating new life of Hitler. They discussed Hitler's childhood and the origins of his megalomaniac fantasies.

Adolf Hitler was the only surviving son of a devoted mother and an abusive and heavy-drinking father, who was 23 years older than his wife. Four of their children died in childhood; a sister, Paula, lived until 1960. She and the family doctor, Eduard Bloch, who was Jewish, are the main authorities for Hitler's early childhood. After the war, Paula, who never exploited her position as sister of the Führer, spoke of her mother as "a very soft and tender person ... it was especially my brother Adolf who challenged my father to extreme harshness and who got his sound thrashing every day". Hitler himself said that his beloved mother lived in constant concern about the beatings.

Hitler's father died when he was 13, his mother four years later. Both Paula and Dr Bloch testify to Hitler's "indefatigable" care for his mother when she was dying of breast cancer. After his father's death, Hitler dropped out of school and lived a hippy-like life of fantasy in Vienna. When one reads Ian Kershaw's account, one cannot avoid feeling compassion for the sufferings of this abnormal but gifted boy, as well as being aware of the terrible consequences of his fantasies.

Bill Clinton and Robin Cook are no Hitlers, but in each case something fundamental seems to have gone wrong. Bill Clinton had disastrous parenting; we do not know the psychological cause of Robin Cook's unhappiness, but he has plainly been very unhappy. Margaret Cook describes his reaction to his discovery that he had no support for the Labour leadership after John Smith's death. "He sank into the deepest despondency ... he talked of the paradox that Labour could well win the next election and that he would then be in the Cabinet, but he felt anything other than elated." At the time this was apparent to the most casual observer. I remember passing Mr Cook in 1996 on the pavement outside St Stephen's Yard; he was alone in his thoughts, his expression was one of depression, of an inward-looking despair.

Indeed, Robin Cook is a tragic figure. One can feel sympathy for the anguished child that is somewhere inside him, and for his lost hopes. But he cannot last long as Foreign Secretary, and little good can come of his remaining months in office. He is not new Labour; he is not old Labour; he is not the future of Labour. Perhaps it is a pity that Peter Mandelson has gone; of the two men he was the one whose political future was worth saving.

comment@the-times.co.uk

'In Russia the desires of the potential customer are irrelevant — you simply queue up and get what you are given'

I was driving through the grey slush on a bleak country road near the godforsaken town of Klin (birthplace of Tchaikovsky) last week when my passenger remarked upon the large concrete slabs that line almost every road in the former Soviet Union. "Those things are hideous," he said, not without reason. "Well, the Soviets probably thought they looked modern," somebody else piped up from the back seat. "And that's all they have in the way of fencing," she added.

Here, everyone agreed, she had hit upon the problem. Russia does not have a supply-and-demand economy, it has a supply economy. The potential consumer's desires are irrelevant — you get what you are given.

Under Communism, and in the early years of perestroika, if you saw a queue in the street you would join it without knowing what was on sale at the end of it. People stood freezing for hours in the hope that a street trader's box of bath-sponges would not run out before they reached the front.

Essentially, if someone was selling it, you needed to buy it — macaroni, soap, oranges, toothbrushes. "I want some cream cheese," you might think. "Sorry madam, we've only got lightbulbs," the sales assistant might say. So, the next time you went shopping, you would know to ask for lightbulbs. Such would be the roaring trade in lightbulbs that the supply would be endlessly maintained, while cream cheese remained an unattainable dream. A supply economy which creates for itself the illusion of demand is established. (In fact, both lightbulbs and cream cheese were equally hard to come by in the early 1990s, along with everything else.)

Anna Blundy

Things perked up a bit under Boris Yeltsin's presidency, but, since the catastrophic economic crash in August, factories have closed, useless, grim and ludicrously expensive industrial towns in the far North have been evacuated in their entirety and the former Soviet workforce is at a loss as to what to do with itself.

The vast and long-since superfluous staff of factories making televisions to 1960s standards demand in vain that their back wages be paid and their jobs be returned to them. Although they, at least, have something with which to barter privately — old televisions. The scientists and technicians populating the hundreds of secret cities all over Russia are not so lucky, unless one counts the odd container of plutonium, known to be readily available to the determined.

Barter as payment now accounts for 80 per cent of the economy and it can be a dirty game. On January 4, Estonia announced a decision to grant the Russian town of Ivangorod, situated on its border, 721,000 krone of what it described as "humanitarian aid" with which to pay off Ivangorod's debt to the Estonian town of Narva for water supply and sewage system services.

Having accrued a debt of $1 million since Estonian independence, the Russians, whose water and sewage disposal was finally cut off on January 2, threatened to dump their sewage into the Narova River to be carried to the Bay of Finland. The Estonians backed down and accepted their own money as payment for their own services.

In Chelyabinsk a company that, among other things, constructs metro systems, was unable to pay its taxes, so the Chelyabinsk authorities ordered the company to construct them a metro system. Whether or not Chelyabinsk needed a metro did not come into the equation. Lada factories continue to churn out 1950s Fiats with the same ancient equipment. Why? Because that is what they do.

Yevgeni Primakov, the Russian Prime Minister, is keen to stabilise the country's devastated economy and to stop the rouble plummeting much lower than its present rate of 22 to the dollar. But the day when old ladies in dusty uniforms stop watching metro escalators simply because they have always been escalator watchers, and when demand for cream cheese or lightbulbs results in an abundance of cream cheese and lightbulbs, still seems a long way off.

comment@the-times.co.uk

That's Wendy

AFTER all the scurrilous innuendo inspired by the trade trip to Copacabana by my good friend Peter Mandelson, I am delighted to learn that Wendy is cruising towards an honour for his work with the boys from Brazil.

The Brit, who made an "outstanding contribution to strengthen economic ties" between Britain and Brazil, is to be recognised. Señor Rubens Antonio Barbosa, the Brazilian Ambassador, is to present the "personality of the year" award at a gala dinner at the Dorchester next month.

To assure Wendy of victory, the Diary has sent His Excellency its nomination, with notes detailing how energetically Wendy pursued export outlets for his country. Ah, Wendy is back. Quite wonderful.

● *I HAVE no faith in a "Downing Street inquiry" into the contract awarded to Sarah Macaulay, so-called girlfriend of Gordon Brown. Little has been done since I broke the news of the award a year ago.*

Drama Queen

FATHER-in-law to a prince he may about to be, but Christopher Rhys-Jones (below left) is treated with little regal respect. "He was appearing in a play at the memorial hall," says a source in Brenchley, his Kent village. "One scene required him to eat a piece of Turkish delight lying on the floor — but a joker had sprayed it with WD40. Christopher was furious and stormed out, never to grace the stage again." Matrons at the Brenchley Drama Group decline to comment, but one aggrieved member says: "It's a damn shame. The Queen might have come to see our productions."



● *LESS gripped by wedding fever is Dame Barbara Cartland (above). "It does seem a rather dull business," opines the pink dame, tiring of the love game, being 97 and all. But surely Prince Edward is fairly exciting? "He is very young and I've never met him, at least I don't think so." But ma'am, you must approve of Sophie, striking for feminism by continuing to work? "Royals are expected to behave royally," she argues penetratingly. "I don't want to go to a wedding like that." I urge royal sorts to send Babs a stiffy.*

Meal ticket

THAT late-night exercise enthusiast Ron Davis is not letting his little awkwardness on Clapham Common get between him and God. The exiled King of Wales is to make his first speech since his career blip at a "lunchtime conversation" in the City at Wesley's Chapel. Should he feel moved by the confessional atmosphere to relive his "meal" (sic), I trust the brokers in the congregation will show their customary sensitivity.

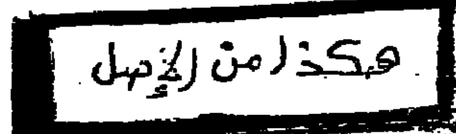


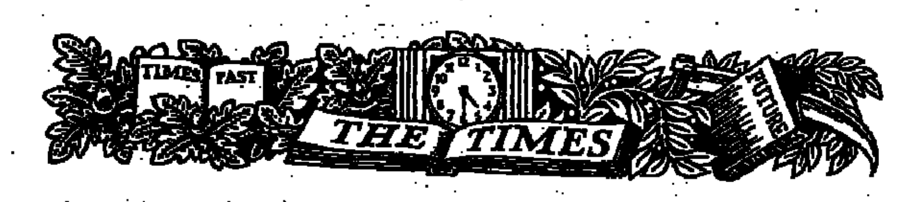
Bed panner

THE splendid Ann Widdecombe is resorting to guerrilla warfare to attack Government bed-snatchers. Ann Keen MP, a Labour toiler, was banging on about why we do not need more hospital beds (a change there, surely?) on a Sky phone-in and then the delicious Ann called. She unzipped her grenades and blew apart the bed-snatchers' case. Afterwards, Mrs Keen was said to look quite pale and very cross.

● *OH, no. Wendy's comeback has gone belly up. I hear that his newest best friend, the Prince of Wales, has not given the resignation "more than a moment's notice".*

JASPER GERARD





THE COOK BOOK

Public and private lessons for the Foreign Secretary

Robin Cook is a powerful analyst of impersonal forces. In the Labour Cabinet he is dominant in the realms of language and ideas. He is a man of both single and independent mind. His virtues certainly fit him to be Foreign Secretary and his vices, even those so viciously set out by his ex-wife yesterday, do not debar him.

Whether he can maintain his position in the fractious, febrile administration that is the new New Labour is still debatable. Even before yesterday's attacks, Mr Cook was famous for ending his marriage of 29 years in 1997 in a Heathrow VIP lounge, with a newspaper about to reveal his longstanding affair with his secretary, a wife with her holiday bags packed and a Downing Street press officer's pencil held to his head. When told to choose between wife and mistress, he brusquely discarded his wife, an action which, while easily explicable to a a Pitt or Palmerston, carries a whiff of callous self-indulgence that has not often widely been admired.

Wide admiration is something which modern governments, most especially this modern government, actively seek. Mr Cook must have been nervous, therefore, about the publication of his wife's autobiography even though she could arguably do him no damage that he had not already inflicted on himself. Margaret Cook has not landed her punches as lightly as she disingenuously claims; what partner to a bitter divorce ever does? Yesterday's newspaper extract was an unappetising catalogue not just of allegedly serial infidelity but of political jealousies, overweening vanity and episodes of lost self-control. But aside from her allegations of past drinking and pill-popping, there is little, including his reciprocated antipathy to Gordon Brown, that was not already public knowledge.

Diplomacy is Mr Cook's job: and it is as a diplomat, in the broadest sense of that term, that he must in future be carefully judged. He needs to be able to bring people behind him for the British interest, not just his own people but other politicians and diplomats. In this sphere of human relations, where his former wife dismisses him as a man of "no natural courtesy and sympathy", she is not the only observer to find the Foreign Secretary wanting.

Mr Cook, so brilliant an exploiter of weakness in Opposition, has been unsteady himself at the Foreign Office, a portfolio that he at first seemed almost to hold in contempt. His clumsy attempt to appoint Gaynor Regan, now the second Mrs Cook, as his diary secretary was a crass, if minor, misjudgment that symptomised a disdain for the institutional environment. The damage he has inflicted on the internal morale and international standing of the FO is likely to be the main thrust of the criticisms directed against him tomorrow, when the Foreign Affairs Select Committee takes testimony from the prematurely retiring Sir David Gore-Booth — the diplomat whose sad fate it was to be High Commissioner to India when Mr Cook's indelicate handling of Kashmir mired the Queen's visit in controversy.

Sir David is himself hardly the most sensitive soul in the service — he is before the committee to rebut the Ombudsman's verdict on his handling of an incident when he was Ambassador to Saudi Arabia — but he speaks for a wide constituency of officials unhappy with Mr Cook's cavalier attitude to briefings, with his tendency to blame subordinates for his not infrequent blunders, and with what is seen as a counterproductive obsession with "re-branding" the Foreign Office. The cooler Mr Cook sets out to make Britannia's outposts, it is argued, the more he perpetuates tired clichés of British diplomacy as a bastion of chinless privilege.

There is substance to these charges, as there is to the view that Mr Cook's video-launched ethical foreign policy gratuitously distorted the pursuit of British interests. If he is to stay at the Foreign Office, he needs to mend relations with its staff quite as much as he needs to rebuild bridges in Cabinet. There is some evidence that he has recently tried harder than before to put his back into his job, and may even be starting to enjoy it. That is in his own interest as well as Labour's; it is hard now to see him rising beyond that role.

The Cabinet would not be the stronger for his departure. There is need for a heavyweight counter to the Chancellor, particularly on EMU where Mr Cook's sceptical eye is a valuable presence. One hope around which the Labour leadership should rally is that this thorny but talented minister can bring an end to this time when he has been an understandably distracted man.

NURSING FOR NURSES

A proper career structure is as important as pay

Lack of recruits to any profession is usually blamed on one factor: pay. That is assumed to be the case with the current shortage of nurses. Eight thousand are needed to fill hospital vacancies. Yet a sudden increase in nurses' pay is unlikely to result in a sudden rise in numbers of recruits or to ease the hospitals' immediate predicament. The Health Secretary, Frank Dobson, must tackle all aspects of the profession with the same radicalism that David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, has shown towards teaching. Failure to do so will threaten reforms whose implementation depends on there being enough nurses.

Nurses' pay lags behind that of other public services; a junior nurse is paid 17 per cent less than a new teacher. Yet simply promising an inflation-busting wage increase would be a short-sighted response — and one that Gordon Brown is likely to resist. Any pay rise should be conditional on reform of the existing straitjacket of grades and pay scales. Nurses' salaries take too little account of any added responsibilities, and the system prevents them from earning more than £26,000 unless they move into management.

The best recruits will enter nursing only if it offers a secure career progression, rewarding skills and expertise. At present there is no formal fast track promotion scheme. Such ideas were sketched out by the former Health Minister, Alan Milburn, before his promotion to Chief Secretary. The complaints they provoked from nursing unions should not deter Mr Dobson from giving them further thought. Flexibility in pay should be accompanied by more adaptable working practices — the providing of crèches, for instance, or the matching of shifts with the school day.

Ministers should also take a fresh look at nurses' training. Fourteen per cent dropped out last year. Could this rate be lowered by tailoring training more closely to the level of skills required, allowing some nurses to become experts in certain fields, and others to learn as apprentices on wards? Yet Mr Dobson cannot wait the three years it takes for a nurse to be trained. Quite apart from the existing 8,000 vacancies, a quarter of all nurses will reach retirement age next year.

Although he considers the practice an "international disgrace", Mr Dobson should be thankful that people are willing to come to Britain and work in a hospital at the current level of pay. He should welcome them — and offer to train them, too. He must do more, too, to lure the 77,000 nurses who have left back into the profession. Schemes to retrain them already exist; but financial incentives are needed. Nursing reform is not only a necessary part of the Government's modernisation project, but also a pressing political need if cries of "crisis" are not to continue to emanate from hospital wards.

EVER YOUNG

Fiction handles ageing better than modern societies do

Europe's most famous reporter turned 70 yesterday, but still retains the childish looks, boyish enthusiasm and sexless energy that have won him admiring fans around the world and have sold 170 million copies of 22 books in 51 languages. Tintin is not only that rare example of a famous Belgian; he has become a figure so bemusingly real to all those who have followed him across remote deserts, down darkened corridors and to the outer reaches of the seas and the heavens that scientists and legislators are loath to admit that he is a mere figment of an illustrator's imagination. The French parliament has staged a debate in which each faction will claim him for their own. Psychoanalysts delve into Tintin's ambiguous sexuality. And scholars compile exegeses of the philosophy, social significance and *Weltanschauung* of the hack, his quiff and his dog.

A ruder and less complex navigator through this troubled world also turns 70 this year with the promise of long-delayed matrimony. Popeye is finally to marry Olive Oyl after a courtship that must rank as the longest and most rancorous in all seafaring history. The ceremony will take place on the isle of Spinachvania, and all Hollywood's gossip columnists are waiting to see whether the pipe-smoking old seadog will settle down with his new family, including the already adopted youngest member, Swee' Pea.

The two explorers — the childhood equivalents of *The Archers*, reappearing with timeless regularity — have now passed pensionable age, but are as actively engaged in life as they were when comic strips were young and celluloid a novelty. Those of more solid flesh and blood, however, find that age presents more formidable barriers. However well they preserve their bodies, their energies and talents are all too often ignored or disparaged by today's youth-obsessed society. Ageism is an ugly word, but it denotes an uglier phenomenon. It is the opposite of what most cultures in all places and all ages have inculcated: respect for the old, honour for the wise and roles for all.

Luckily, a growing movement recognises the foolishness of this shallow worship of youth. Older people are increasingly being brought back to the workplace, the television screen and the voluntary organisation. Their experience enriches us, just as those whose fictional lives have reached 70 entertain us. Isn't it time, however, that just a few wrinkles appeared on Tintin's brow?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Call for 'honesty' over euro policy

From Mr George Thomas

Sir, Now that the euro has been launched, this country should decide once and for all, and without delay, whether it wants to be in or out of the European Union.

There can seldom have been an issue over which we have so needed, but have never had or been less likely to get, honest government: honest government being government that is quite truthful about the anticipated outcome of its policies.

One thing that is now clear, after years of obfuscation, is that the EU intends to become a federal state. In some ways it already has more federal powers than the federal Government of the US and we already know that these will increase.

Countries that are neither in nor out — those not converting to the euro — will suffer the worst of both worlds. If they prosper they will be accused of unfair practices and will be "punished" and the cause of their success negated. Not being independent, they will be unable to defend themselves and their success will turn to failure.

Failure from the outset is more likely, however, because Euro-bureaucracy and rules make successful trading outside euroland, for all but a few very large or very specialised businesses, almost impossible. For the UK this will be particularly damaging.

There are arguments for being in and for being out of the euro/EU, but the argument advanced in both Government and Opposition that we should "wait and see" will be so harmful that you have to wonder at their motives.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE THOMAS,
17 Campden Hill Square, W8 7JY.
January 6.

From Mr Lance Anisfeld

Sir, The two most commonly heard economic arguments in favour of the single currency are the reduction of foreign exchange costs for industry and the deflationary price differences across Europe which it will reveal. Both these arguments are bogus.

Costs for one business are revenues for another. With fewer foreign exchange transactions, banks and foreign exchange dealers must surely lose out by an equal amount to the gains for industry. The net effect on business will be completely neutral.

Price differences have always existed and always will. However, sophisticated consumers know how to take advantage of them, and it is much more likely that the development of Internet technology will increase real global competition than — as is sometimes patronisingly argued — that the redenomination of prices will spare consumers the need to get out their calculators. The beer trips across the Channel prove that they are not that ignorant where gains are to be had.

It is now very clear that political integration is what most pro-Europeans clamour for. I too am a pro-European, one who wants Europe to grow peacefully and democratically — which is why I completely oppose what is now happening in continental Europe. Forget the mild disaster of the ERM. Look what has happened to other European federations in the last ten years — namely the USSR and Yugoslavia. A federal superstate is doomed to collapse and possibly civil war.

I pray for my children's sake that we remain independent and stay out.

Sincerely,
LANCE ANISFELD
(Special Adviser to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, 1991-92),
33 Linden Lea, N2 0RF.
January 5.

From Mr Robert Woollard

Sir, I disagree with Mr Stan Snowdon (letter, January 5) that the small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) would benefit by being inside euroland.

Oskar Lafontaine let the cat out of the bag when he put tax harmonisation firmly on the agenda (leading article, November 28). This doesn't suit the British electorate, let alone Britain's SMEs. I suspect that the executive director of the Federation of Small Businesses (letter, January 1) understands this.

I formed my own SME almost 30 years ago. Our overseas business is nearly always transacted in US dollars. If anyone wishes to deal in euros I have no problem. However, for this country to give up 1,000 years of economic and political independence in order to prove that we are good Europeans is daft.

The euro is but a few days old. Europe as it stands is largely socialist and needs to change dramatically. If you asked me to choose today between euroland and the US dollar region, there is only one choice: to apply for membership of the North American Free Trade Agreement immediately.

In a few years' time the story may be different. Let's wait and see how this experiment pans out — we have little to lose and much to gain.

Yours sincerely,
ROBERT WOOLLARD
(Chairman/Managing Director),
Cascom Limited,
Cascom House, Reform Road,
Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 8BV.
January 5.

Letters may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.
e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

Christ 'made-over' as Che Guevara

From the Reverend Richard Thomas, MIPR

Sir, Once again a chorus of tight-lipped disapproval rises from the Churches over next Easter's advertising campaign ("Jesus is given new revolutionary image", report, January 6). Like Christ's children sitting in the marketplace, the critics are calling out to each other "We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not cry" (Luke vii, 32).

I shall certainly be supporting the campaign in the Oxford diocese. The image of a revolutionary, killed for wanting to change the world, is not inappropriate for celebrating the death and resurrection of Jesus, who was himself mistaken for a revolutionary and tried for blasphemy.

It is a striking and bold campaign which uses the language of parable, taking images that contrast with an accepted understanding of God, so that new avenues to explore faith are opened. Advertising cannot do the job of a good sermon, but it is a medium excellently suited to public parable, and the first task of the Christian communicator is to make these connections.

The Churches Advertising Network has created many stimulating campaigns, without much thanks or any financial support from church leaders. Every penny for the campaigns has had to be raised by network members. A poll conducted after an Easter campaign in 1995 showed that over 70 per cent of the population thought the Church should be advertising, and more than 35 per cent said it made them think about their own faith.

It really doesn't matter if church leaders don't relate to this campaign — it's not designed for them. What matters is that an opportunity created for a public discussion of the meaning of the death and resurrection of Jesus should not be sacrificed on the altar of ecclesiastical correctness.

Yours sincerely,
RICHARD THOMAS
(Communications Director,
Diocese of Oxford),
Diocesan Church House,
North Hinksey, Oxford OX2 0NB.
January 6.

From Mr Ernest B. Scalabrin

Sir, While I am delighted that people recognise Jesus as a radical, and not the wimp he has often been depicted as in paintings and movies, to present him in the image of a revolutionary like Che is antithetical to Christ's mission on earth. Jesus was very careful to instruct his followers that His kingdom was not of this world and would not be brought about by the means of this world, like violent revolutions.

It strikes me that the "Che" Jesus is as inappropriate as the meek and mild version that we have become used to. When Jesus called his followers to go into the world and make disciples of all nations (Matthew xxviii, 19-20), he did not call them to change or re-invent his image according to popular culture. If he is who he says he is, and I and so many others believe he is, he doesn't need earthly make-overs to promote himself.

Sincerely,
ERNEST B. SCALABRIN,
311 High Street,
Northvale, New Jersey 07647.
ernjudy@iol11.com
January 7.

From Mrs Ermina E. Bosch

Sir, Ernesto Che Guevara was a failure in everything he attempted: a failed medical student, a failed revolutionary in his native Argentina, even a failure at working for Fidel Castro in Cuba after the takeover of January 1959. He died because of his own incompetence after leading his group around in circles in the jungle, without food or supplies.

It is ironic that, because of a good photograph taken long ago with an old Leica, his image has been adopted worldwide as a symbol of the perfect revolutionary.

That unscrupulous people such as Castro use it as propaganda for their own benefit is understandable, but that Christians choose to jump on the bandwagon is inconceivable.

Sincerely,
E. E. BOSCH,
40 Sandalwood Mansions,
Stone Hall Gardens, W8 5UR.
January 7.

Cromwell escutcheon

From Mr T. P. J. Edlin

Sir, The taffity escutcheon taken from Oliver Cromwell's hearse by Robert Uvedale in 1658 (report, January 5) is currently in the possession of Westminster School, Uvedale's *alma mater*.

As you report, Uvedale, then a 16-year-old scholar at the school, darted between the soldiery guarding the bier and snatched from it the little silk banner — known at the school as the Majesty Scutcheon — disappearing with it into the crowd of his school-fellows before anyone could recover from the shock of surprise and catch him.

Having been preserved by the Uvedale family for over 300 years, the boy's souvenir passed into the hands of a descendant, Miss Mary West, by whom it was given to the school in 1964, since when it has hung outside the Head Master's study.

John Carleton, Head Master at the time of the gift, has described the theft as not merely an act of bravado by Uvedale but an expression of the school's indignant feelings at the lavish honour being paid to one he had been taught to regard as a usurper.

Uvedale himself (1642-1722) went on to become a skilled cultivator of exotic plants, owner of one of the first hothouses in England, and author of a 14-volume herbarium.

Yours faithfully,
T. P. J. EDLIN,
Merton College,
Oxford OX1 4JD.
January 6.

Pig farmers' plight

From Mr Robin Beare

Sir, The sad plight of British pig farmers is well expressed in the letter from Paul Cross (January 4), highlighting the excessive profits made by the supermarkets at the expense of the producer and of the retail customer.

Nevertheless our supermarkets display a multitude of imported pig products in the form of a chopped, cured sausage commonly known as "salami": *Milano* and *Felino* from Italy, *chorizo* from Spain, *saucisson sec* from France, *bierwurst* from Germany are only a few examples of an inviting product produced by every European country other than Britain.

Our pig farmers should broaden their horizons and think beyond bacon, ham and pork. Why do we not have an English rival to Parma ham?

Yours faithfully,
ROBIN BEARE,
Scraggs Farm,
Cowden, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 7EB.

Some talk of . . .

From Major David Scowcroft

Sir, Each morning I walk past the impressive array of military hero statues in Whitehall on my way to paperwork in the Stalinesque MoD main building. The statue of Raleigh outside it is not overwhelmed by its neighbours but stands in modest distinction.

The requirement is not its removal, as is suggested from time to time (letters, August 12, 19 and 22, 1996), but the positioning of a similar-size statue to achieve symmetry. The monument should be to one not as august as Montgomery but of a modest military background. (My own military career, for instance, is exceedingly modest.)

Yours sincerely,
DAVID SCOWCROFT,
Ministry of Defence,
Room 4158, Main Building,
Whitehall, SW1A 2HB.
January 4.

Animal drug tests

From Professor A. W. Cuthbert, FRS

Sir, Dr Vernon Coleman's claim (letter, December 31) that animals and humans are so different that experiments performed on animals are "worthless and misleading" is patently untrue.

A cursory examination of modern prescribing practices shows that for many conditions, for example affecting the heart, circulation, respiratory system and kidneys, for inflammatory states, for pain relief, for bacterial infections etc, the same drugs are used in veterinary practice as for human medicine. It is true that there are instances in which the response to a particular drug differs in humans from that in some animal species, similar to the incidence of different responses to a given drug in humans of different ethnic origin; but such instances are exceptional.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN CUTHBERT,
University of Cambridge,
Department of Pharmacology,
Tennis Court Road,
Cambridge CB2 1QJ.
January 1.

From Mr R. T. Oerton

Sir, Dr Peter Rossdale (letter, December 31) points out that a number of animals are bred for laboratory use, and that if the laboratory use of animals were to cease that number would diminish. He then adds: "Should we deny these the gift of life . . . Is it better to have lived and suffered than never to have lived at all?"

This surely is an example of the confusion of thinking which bedevils so much discussion on this and other subjects. As to Dr Rossdale's first question, an animal not yet conceived is not an entity to which anything can be denied or given. His second question makes sense only if posed in relation to an entity which exists or has existed: it cannot be asked about an animal which never comes into existence.

Yours faithfully,
R. T. OERTON,
The Granary, Park Lane,
Cannington, Bridgwater,
Somerset TA5 2LU.
January 1.

Sport letters, page 33

Thank goodness for plain old 1999

From Professor G. J. P. O'Daly

Sir, Although he correctly gives *nonaginta novem* as the Latin for 99, Sir George Engle (letter, January 6) cannot be right to attribute elaborate French *quatre-vingt dix-neuf* to laconic Caesar's Gallic conquest. The true francophone descendant of Latin usage is the compact French-Swiss *nonante neuf*.

As for the date of the current year, every schoolboy would once have known that we are now in *2752 a.u.c.* (*ab urbe condita*: from the foundation of the city of Rome). Postpone the millennium at once!

Yours faithfully,
GERARD O'DALY,
Department of Greek and Latin,
University College London,
Gower Street, WC1E 6BT.
g.o'daly@ucl.ac.uk
January 6.

From Mr Malcolm Oliver

Sir, Surely the reason that the French eschew the already-available *nonante neuf* in favour of the Académie-endorsed *quatre-vingt dix-neuf* owes less to the Roman conquest than to a desire to avoid being mistaken for Belgians.

Yours sincerely,
MALCOLM OLIVER,
26 Green Lane,
Purley, Surrey CR8 3PG.
January 6.

From Mrs Fenella Ignatiev

Sir, It may be no coincidence that the Russian word for syllable is *slog*. To write 1999 in Russian requires 14 of them: *Tysyacha dyevyatsot dyevyanosto dyevyatiy god.*

No wonder they love their acronyms so much — USSR, KGB, NKVD . . .

Yours faithfully,
FENELLA IGNATIEV,
21a Gunterstone Road, W14 9BP.
January 6.

From Mr Richard C. Dixon

Sir, I have always subscribed to the subtraction method of Roman numerology as being easier and neater than those based on addition or abbreviation. MCMLXXXXVIIII would have been abhorred by Horace, Pliny and Cicero, MIM is too ugly for the likes of Ovid, but MCMXCIX would appeal to the military mind of Tacitus and the great Caesar; as it does to me.

Yours sincerely,
RICHARD DIXON,
210 Dover Road,
Walmer, Deal, Kent CT14 7NB.
January 6.

From Mr Philip Le Brocq

Sir, That old stickler A. E. Housman might have taken this matter more gravely. On November 26, 1930, he ended a letter to Monica Bridges:

> I hope that you and yours are well; but your son must not hope for heaven if he writes MCMXXX for MDCCCCXXX.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP Le BROCQ,
The Cottage, le Bourg,
St Clement, Jersey JE2 6FY.
plebrocq@super.net.uk
January 7.

From Mr P. W. Esling

Sir, MDCCCCLXXXXVIIII or MIM? The problem for the Roman stonemason was a very simple one: Am I being paid *per horam* or *per opus*?

Yours,
PETER W. ESLING,
3 Llysnewydd Cottages,
Drefach Felindre,
Llandysul, Dyfed SA44 5UT.
January 6.

Puzzles galore

From Mr G. D. Clarke

Sir, Jumbo crosswords for Christmas Eve, Boxing Day, Bank Holiday, New Year's Day, new year weekend — this is sheer sadism. My social life is in ruins and I haven't finished one yet.

Can we not come to some agreement whereby you publish, say, one a week and I stop writing you letters?

Yours faithfully,
G. D. CLARKE,
31 Crutchfield Lane,
Walton-on-Thames,
Surrey KT12 2QY.
January 2.

Sound and fury

From Mr Robin Stephenson

Sir, Environmental health inspectors in Warrington, Cheshire, are investigating an intermittent whining "that can be heard only by women" (News in brief, December 31).

This phenomenon would be no mystery to women in the South of England, where the period between Christmas and new year is filled with the whining of their menfolk bewailing a Christmas spent with relatives they detest and anticipating the demands of the new year sales.

At least in Warrington the whining is only intermittent.

Yours,
ROBIN STEPHENSON,
The Chestnuts,
22 Greenacres Drive, Ringmer,
Lewes, East Sussex BN8 5LZ.
January 3.



COURT CIRCULAR

SANDRINGHAM HOUSE
January 10: Divine Service was held in Sandringham Parish Church this morning. The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich preached the Sermon.

Birthdays today

The Right Rev J.A. Baker, former Bishop of Salisbury, 71; Mr J. Rashleigh Belcher, thoracic surgeon, 82; Sir Alan Bowness, art historian, 71; Sir Robin Carford, former civil servant, 76; Mr Henry Cecil, racehorse trainer, 56; Mr Jason Connery, actor, 36; Mr Neville Duke, former test pilot, 77; Mr Brian Moore, rugby player, 37; Sir Alastair Morton, former chairman, Eurotunnel, 61; Lord Newton, 49; Sir Anthony Nutting, former MP, 79; Mr Jim Perris, former Governor, Wormwood Scrubs, 57; Mr Bryan Robson, football manager, 42; Air Chief Marshal Sir John Rogers, 71; Mr Arthur Scargill, trade unionist, 61; Mr John Sessions, actor and comedian, 46; Air Commodore Joy Tamblin, former director, WRAF, 73; Mr R.C. Tress, former Master, Birkbeck College, 84.

Allan Heyman, QC

A memorial service will be held at the Temple Church, London EC4, at 5pm on Thursday, January 14, 1999, to commemorate the life of Allan Heyman, QC.

Sidney Newland

A memorial service for Sidney George Newland, OBE, JP, Life President of the Institute of Barristers' Clerks, will be held at the Temple Church, London EC4, on Wednesday, January 27, 1999, at 5pm.

New Year Honours

Mrs A.P. Renard was appointed an MBE in the New Year Honours for services to the community, especially leisure libraries, in Bradford, West Yorkshire.

Party

Corporation of London
The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress were the hosts on Saturday at the Mansion House at a party for children connected with City institutions, livery companies, HM Forces and London Boroughs.

School announcements

Arnold School, Blackpool
The Spring term began on January 7 and will end on Friday, March 26, 1999. The Term's events include: Entrance Examination on January 9; Parents' & Friends' Association Burns' Night on January 23; opening of the Centenary Complex and Sports Hall on January 25 with former England Football Captain, Mr J. Armfield, as Guest of Honour; School production of *Mort* from February 9 to 12; Headmaster's Debate on February 27; CCF Annual Inspection on March 12; School production of *Charley's Aunt* from March 15 to 20; Inter House Sports Finals day on March 18; Oxbridge conference on March 23; School Concert on March 24; Golf Championship Finals at Kenilworth, on March 25. During the Easter holiday Sixth Form groups will visit the French Alps, Andalucia and French and Belgium Battlefields; and Lower School pupils will visit Paris.
Arnold School, Blackpool is a registered charity which exists for the education of children. Charity No 526679.

Benenden School
Term starts today at Benenden School. Open mornings for parents of prospective students will be held on February 6, and March 13 and 20. In celebration of Benenden's 75th Anniversary, there will be a Decade Lunch for 1940s Seniors on March 4 at Benenden, a Reception for 1980s/90s Seniors at Christie's, London SW1, on March 10 and a Decade Lunch for 1950s Leavers on April 24 at Benenden. There will be a Gala Performance at Her Majesty's Theatre, Haymarket, London SW1, on March 21 of *Benenden A Great Company* featuring pupils past and present, staff and parents. A luncheon and awards ceremony to celebrate 75 years of women's achievement will be held at The Savoy Hotel, London WC2, on April 22. Seniors' Day will take place on May 15. Speaker of the Year will be Rosalind Copisarow. All Seniors are warmly invited, especially leavers from 1969, 1974, 1979, 1984, 1989 and 1994.

Bromsgrove School
School convenes today for the Lent Term. The Choral Society will perform *African Sanctus* in the Memorial Chapel on Thursday, March 18. There will be an Open Morning for prospective Sixth Formers on Saturday, January 30, commencing at 9.30am. Term ends on Friday, March 19.

The Cheltenham Ladies' College
Term begins today at The Cheltenham Ladies' College. Half term is from 5.00pm on Friday, February 12, to Sunday, February 21, 1999 (inclusive). There will be a Combined Concert with Cheltenham College at 7.30pm on Sunday, March 14, at Cheltenham Town Hall. The Sixth Form Production of *Godspell* will take place in the Princess Hall on March 18 and 19, starting at 7.30pm. Term ends on Saturday, March 20, 1999.
The Cheltenham Ladies' College is a registered charity established for the purpose of the education of girls.

Cobham Hall
The Spring Term begins today. Sheri Lucas continues as Guardian. There will be a Sixth Form Information Day on Saturday, February 6, an Information Day for Heads and Educational Consultants on Wednesday, February 10, and an Open Day for prospective pupils and their parents on Tuesday, March 2. The School Play is on Saturday, March 20, and Term ends on Sunday, March 21.

Giggleswick School
The Spring Term begins today and will end on Saturday, March 20, when the Old Giggleswickian Dinner at School will be held. Philip Boyle is the Captain of Football, and Dominic Lunt and Nicola Hyslop are the Captains of Cross Country. "Scarrig" will be run on February 27. The Old Giggleswickians London Dinner will take place at the House Of Commons on Wednesday, March 3. Scholarship Examinations will be held at Giggleswick beginning Thursday, February 4. Information Evenings for prospective pupils and their parents will take place in Windermere on Tuesday, February 23, and Ripon on Wednesday, March 10. Catteral Hall, the Preparatory School for Giggleswick, will hold Boarding Taster Weekends on February 27 and March 13. Further information can be obtained from the Headmaster's Secretary, 01729 823545 or e-mail headmaster@giggleswick.n-yorks.sch.uk

Haileybury
Easter Term at Haileybury begins today. Mr James Standing has joined the Biology Department. The Annual Service of Confirmation will be taken by the Lord Bishop of Bedford on Saturday, February 13, at 10.30am. The Fifth Haileybury Model United Nations Conference is on March 20 and 21. The Spring Concert, including Rossini's *Stabat Mater* is on Thursday, March 25, at 8.00pm. The new Technology Centre will be formally opened following the termly meeting of Council at 6.30pm on Friday, March 19, by Mr Denis Filer, former Director General of the Engineering Council and President-elect of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers.

Harrogate Ladies' College
Harrogate Ladies' College opened for the Spring Term on Wednesday, January 6. Entrance tests for September 1999 take place on Wednesday, February 3. The Drama Group presents *Enemy of the People* on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, March 19, 20 and 21. The North Schools Lacrosse Tournament for U14 is at Darlington on Saturday, January 30, and U15 at the Wirral on Saturday, March 13. The Scottish Schools Lacrosse Tournament is on Saturday, February 6. St Michael's Hospice will hold a Savoury Supper in School on Tuesday, March 9. The Parents and Friends Association will hold a Trivia Quiz in School at 7.00pm on Saturday, March 13. The Choir will premiere Ruth Byrchmore's *Canticles* in Trinity College Chapel, Cambridge on Saturday, March 20, and there will be a Chapel Concert at 4.00pm on Sunday, February 28. The Ski Trip will be to France between March 26 and April 2. Half Term is from noon Saturday, February 13, until 6.30pm Sunday, February 21. Term ends on Wednesday, March 24, after Easter Music in St Wilfrid's Church at 2.15pm.
Harrogate Ladies' College is a Registered Charity no 529579. Providing quality education for girls since 1893.

The Leys School, Cambridge
The Lent Term begins today. Entrance tests for 11+ and 13+ places will be held on Saturday, February 6, and Scholarship Examinations on Monday, February 8. The School Concert is on Friday, February 12.

Pipers Corner School, High Wycombe
The Spring Term begins today at Pipers Corner. Entrance tests for 11+ and 12+ entry will be held on Saturday, January 30, in the Main School. The Right Rev Michael Hill, Bishop of Buckingham, will be conducting the Confirmation Service on Thursday, March 11, at 2pm at St Michael & All Angels, Hughenden.

Reed's School
Spring Term begins today and an Open Morning will be held on Saturday, January 30. Akshay Dosaj continues as Captain of School and James Smith will be Captain of Hockey. The Bishop of Guildford will conduct the Confirmation Service in the School Chapel on Tuesday, March 16.

St George's School, Ascot
Boarders returned to St George's School, Ascot yesterday and School opens today for the Spring Term, with Mrs Grant Peterkin taking up her new post as Headmistress. Antonia Phillips continues as Head Girl. The Senior School Drama Production of *Top Girls* will take place February 11 to 13. Half Term will be from noon Tuesday, February 16, to Sunday, February 21. There will be a Prep Schools Music Day on Friday, March 19, culminating in a concert at 5.30pm for an invited audience. Term ends on Friday, March 26. The Fifth Year have a Spanish visit to Salamanca from March 26 to April 2.

St Mary's School, Wantage
Term began on Wednesday, January 6, in this the 125th Centenary year of the school. The School Play *Daisy Pulls it Off* will be performed on February 10, 11 and 12, in the school hall. The 13+ Scholarship Examinations will take place on Wednesday, March 3, and the Chapel Centenary Service will be held on Sunday, March 21, at 10am. For further details please contact the School. Term ends on Thursday, March 25.

Memorial service

Sir Robin Brook
The Duke of Edinburgh was represented by Mr Robert Pettigrew and Princess Margaret by the Hon Mrs Christopher Whitehead at a service of thanksgiving for the life and work of Sir Robin Brook, merchant banker, held on Friday at St Lawrence Jewry-next-Guildhall. Canon David Burgess officiated and the Rev John Slater led the prayers.

Mr Neil Stacy read from *Ulysses* by Lord Tennyson. Professor Michael Foot, Professor Lesley Rees and Mr Nicholas Lund gave addresses. Among others present were:

Mme Sarah Brook (daughter), Mr and Mrs Richard Burnett (son-in-law and daughter), Miss Rachel Veron, Mr and Mrs Tristan Veron, Mr Casper Butt and Mr Theo Butt (grandchildren), Mrs Christine Slater, Mr and Mrs P Bisgood, Mr and Mrs N Parker, Mr and Mrs T Young, Dr B and Dr C Howard, Mr D M Brook, Ms J Burnett, Mr and Mrs A Butt, Mr and Mrs R Dalton Holmes.

The Countess of Limerick, Lord Monro of Langholm, Lord Paul, the Hon Mrs Stuart, Lady (Roger) Bannister, Sir Brooks and Lady Richards, Sir Alan Campbell, Sir Arthur and Lady Gold, Lady Inglefield, Sir Christopher Laidlaw, Sir Patrick Reilly, Sir Joseph Rotblat, Lady Riches (Queen Elizabeth's Fund), Dame Gillian Wagner, Dame Mary Glen Haig, Lieutenant-General Sir James Wilson, Major-General Sir Digby and Lady Raeburn, Sir Peter Walters.

Mr David Inglefield (Master of the Haberdashers' Company) and Mrs Inglefield with Captain Robert Fisher (Clerk) and other members of the company; Mr Alex Ninian (Deputy Chairman of the Special Trustees of St Bartholomew's Hospital) with other special trustees.

Mr Eddie George (Governor, Bank of England), Dr Margaret Jones (chief executive, Brook Advisory Centres) with other representatives, Dr K W Allen (clerk emeritus, City University Convocation), Mr Simon Sperryn (London Chamber of Commerce and Industry) with other representatives of the chamber, Mr Derek Casey (English Sports Council), Mr Stephen Cockburn (Ionian Group), Mr Malcolm Denton (general secretary, Central Council of Physical Recreation) with other members of the council.

Mr R Fitts (Ionian Bank of Greece), Mr Ford (St Bartholomew's Foundation for Research), Mr Brian Gilmore (chairman, Royal Hospital NHS Trust) with Major-General Ray Pett (chief executive) and other representatives of the trust, Miss Judith Hanratty (British Petroleum).

Mr Leonard Hatton (chairman, Sports Aid Foundation), Mr John Heffernan (president, RNID), Professor Frances Heidensohn (chairman, East London and City Health Authority) with Mr Peter Coe (chief executive); Mrs C Holroyd (nurse director, Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust), Mr M O'Hara (secretary, City University), Mr L Pike (Commonwealth Games Council for England), Mr John Plant (London and Provincial Nursing Trust).

Dr Mark Seaman (Imperial War Museum), Mr Brian Sedgemore, MP, Mr J Shargley (Queen Mary's University Hospital), Ms Wendy Thomas (chief executive, Population Concern), Ms Anne Weyman (chief executive, Family Planning Association), Professor R Boyd (St George's Hospital Medical School) with Mrs M Talbot; Professor S McNeish and Professor Williams (St Bartholomew's Hospital Medical College Trust), Mr A Wieler (Gurkha Welfare Trust).

The Rev Mark Oakley, Mr R Avery, Professor Michael Besser, Mr and Mrs T Brooks, Professor and Mrs M Brudenell, Professor M de Burgh Daly, Mr A Coombe-Tennant, Professor G Dickinson, Mr J Disley, Mrs M Dunne, Professor M J G Farthing, Professor R Franklin, Mr P Godfrey, Mrs G Gorell Barnes, Mr J Higgins, Mr E Jones, Mr R McNab Jones, Mr N Mills, Mr R Palmer, Mr D Sargent, Mr A Service, Mr E Stone, Mr and Mrs C Wintour, Mr P Zetter, representatives of the Special Forces Club and many other friends and former colleagues.

Nature notes

THE buds are beginning to swell on some trees, and woodpigeons are pecking at the juicy, half-formed leaves inside them. The pigeons will venture out on quite thin twigs to get at the buds, and often tumble off. Mistle-thrushes are feeding on the black ivy berries, and if a pair of them find a good source they will drive all rivals away with churring cries.

On northern coasts, the black and-white eider drakes are already beginning to woo the brown ducks in the flocks: they toss their heads back to show off the pink flush on their breasts, and make deep groaning calls that can be heard half a mile away.

Several cranes have been seen in Norfolk; they are taller than herons, with black-and-white stripes on their long necks, and black wing-feathers drooping over their tails.

A black-bellied dipper from the Continent also arrived at North Walsham in Norfolk last week, but was seen on Saturday being pursued by a sparrowhawk and has not been reported since.

Snowdrops are opening under the trees on garden lawns, and the first primroses can be found in sheltered woods near the south coast. DJM




The crane

Forthcoming marriages

Mr L.E. Armstrong and Miss S.J. Brooks
The engagement is announced between Lee, son of Mr K. Armstrong, of Huntingdon, and Mrs G.D. Lamb, of Beverley, Yorkshire, and Suzi, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs W.J. Brooks, of Broadstairs, Kent.

Mr R.S. Blaskey and Ms S.A. Engelsman
The engagement is announced between Richard, son of the late Mr Harry Blaskey and of Mrs Blaskey, of Roehampton, London, and Simone, daughter of the late Mr Bernard Engelsman and of Mrs Engelsman, of Weybridge, Surrey.

Mr R.M. Cox-Johnson and Lady Caroline Burnett Armstrong
The engagement is announced between Richard, son of the late George and Joan Cox-Johnson, and Christine Caroline Catherine, eldest daughter of the late Earl of Stradbroke and of the Hon Mrs K. Rous, of Clovelly Court, Clovelly.

Mr K.O. Cutler and Miss E.L. Coventry
The engagement is announced between Kevin, son of Mr and Mrs Owen Cutler, of Maidenhead, Berkshire, and Emma, daughter of Mr and Mrs John Coventry, of Little Chalfont, Buckinghamshire.

Mr M. Dimond and Miss C.M. Percy-Robb
The engagement is announced between Matthew, younger son of Mr and Mrs Paul Dimond, of Los Angeles, USA, and Claire, younger daughter of Professor and Mrs Iain Percy-Robb, of Bearsden, Glasgow.

Captain C.M.P. Farr, RHA, and Miss H.A.K. Reynolds
The engagement is announced between Chris, son of Mr and Mrs R. Farr, of Swanage, Dorset, and Holly, daughter of Mr and Mrs C.H. Reynolds, of Hethe, Oxfordshire.

Mr J.P. Griffiths and Miss T.A. May
The engagement is announced between James, son of Mr and Mrs Derek Griffiths, of Earl Stonham, Suffolk, and Tamsin, daughter of Mr John May, of Notting Hill, London, and Mrs David Lemonius, of Yarmouth, Isle of Wight.

Mr R.D. Griffiths and Miss V.H. Skilbeck
The engagement is announced between Russell, younger son of Mr and Mrs Douglas Griffiths, of Orba, Spain, and Virginia, daughter of Mr Richard Skilbeck, of Ashmansworth, Hampshire, and of Mrs Antony Atha, of London.

Mr R.S. Hodges and Miss V.J. Ratcliff
The engagement is announced between Richard, son of Mr G.A. Hodges and Mrs R.A. Hodges, of Terling, Essex, and Victoria, daughter of Mr and Mrs E.H. Ratcliff, of Faulkland, Bath, Somerset.

Mr M.R. Hooper and Miss S.L.R. Pascoe
The engagement is announced between Matthew Rufus, son of the Reverend and Mrs Peter Hooper, of Sherborne, Dorset, and Sarah Louise Rosalinde, daughter of Mr and Mrs Bryan Pascoe, of Ebernoe, Petworth, West Sussex.

Mr T.J.d'O. Hope and Miss A.R. Porter
The engagement is announced between Tara, elder son of Mr and Mrs R.J.d'O. Hope, of Wivelsfield Green, Sussex, and Anna, second daughter of Dr and Mrs G.R. Porter, of Nun Monkton, North Yorkshire.

Mr I. Lewis and Miss V. Jeffrey
The engagement is announced between Ian, youngest son of Mr and Mrs John Lewis, of Eardisley, Herefordshire, and Vanessa, only daughter of the late Mr Richard Jeffrey and of Mrs Nita Olivier, of Charlecote, Warwickshire.

Mr A.G. Marr and Miss S.D. Güsten
The engagement is announced between Alexander, son of Mr and Mrs Andrew Marr, of Beverley, East Yorkshire, and Sarah, daughter of Dr and Mrs Rolf Güsten, of Rome, Italy.

Mr C.J.M. Miskin, QC, and Miss A.J.T. Start
The engagement is announced between Charles, son of Mr Nigel Miskin, of Hurlingham, and the late Mrs Meryl Miskin, and Angharad, elder daughter of Professor Kenneth Brian Start, of Melbourne, Australia, and Mrs Ann Taylor Start, of Kew.

Mr K. Nicolson and Miss C.W. Bowe
The engagement is announced between Keith, only son of Mrs Alexander C. Nicolson and the late Mr Nicolson, of Turriff, Aberdeenshire, and Wendy, second daughter of Major and Mrs Alastair D. Bowe, of Gordon, Berwickshire.

Mr M.S.K. Nimmo and Miss J.E. Hoare
The engagement is announced between Matthew, only son of Mr and Mrs Michael Nimmo, of Hindon, Wiltshire, and Jo, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Derek Hoare, of Medan, Indonesia.

Mr J.A.S. Pilkington and Miss D.A. Lee
The engagement is announced between Jeremy Antony Simon, eldest son of Sir Antony and Lady Pilkington, of Kingsley, Cheshire, and Deborah Anne, younger daughter of Mr C. Lee, of Headbourne Worthy, Hampshire, and Mrs D.V. Lee, of Hursley, Hampshire.

Mr I.M.L. Rees and Miss N.A. Rafferty
The engagement is announced between Ian, youngest son of Mr and Mrs Craig Rees, of Brookmans Park, Hertfordshire, and Nicola, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Terrence Rafferty, of Kinross, Tayside.

Mr G.B. Ritson and Miss E.K. Hulmes
The engagement is announced between Gavin, son of Dr and Mrs Bruce Ritson, of Edinburgh, and Emma, daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Hulmes, of Chester.

Dr M.P. Roseveare and Miss E.J. Bee
The engagement is announced between Peter, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Richard Roseveare, of Bedford, and Jane, younger daughter of Mr Stephen Bee and the late Mrs Margaret Bee, of Norwich.

Mr M.H. Sacher and Miss N. Zatland
The engagement is announced between Michael, son of the late Mr and Mrs Michael Sacher, of London, and Nicola, daughter of Mr and Mrs Philip Zatland, of London.

Mr A.D. Steel and Miss M.V. Kenney
The engagement is announced between Andrew, elder son of Professor Michael and Dr Judith Steel, of St Andrews, Fife, and Veronica (Nonny), daughter of the late Dr Nigel Kenney and of Dr Gail Kenney, of Cambridge.

Mr P.D. Thomas and Miss Z.S. O'Sullivan
The engagement is announced between Peter, son of Mr and Mrs David Thomas, of Durham, and Zoë, daughter of Mr and Mrs T.R. O'Sullivan, of Crouch End, London.

Mr N.R.J. White and Miss C.M. Brown
The engagement is announced between Nicholas White, of Bewdley, Worcestershire, and Constance, only daughter of Mr and Mrs H.G. Brown, of Elmley Lovett, Worcestershire.

Mr N.J. Wotherspoon and Dr D.M. Parry
The engagement is announced between Nicholas, younger son of Mr and Mrs James Wotherspoon, of St Helens, and Delyth, elder daughter of the Revd and Mrs Irvan Parry, of Llandudno, North Wales.

Marriages

Mr P.J.J. Clegg and Miss F.J.E. Cass
The marriage took place on Saturday at St Andrew's, Girton, Cambridge, of Mr Philip Clegg, son of Mr Jonathan Clegg, of West Hampstead, London, and of Mrs George Chesterton, of Malvern, Worcestershire, to Miss Fleur Cass, youngest daughter of Sir Geoffrey and Lady Cass, of Cambridge. The Rev Rob Mackintosh officiated.

The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, was attended by Miss Philippa Wright. Mr Angus MacGregor was best man.

A reception was held in Girton College and the honeymoon will be spent in the Caribbean.

Mr C.E.Y. Vigors and Miss A.E. Slaybaugh
A service of blessing was held at St Paul's, Knightsbridge, on Friday, January 8, 1999, after the marriage in the United States, of Mr Charles Vigors, only son of Mr and Mrs Robin Vigors, of St Tudy, Cornwall, to Miss Amy Slaybaugh, only daughter of the late Mr Gerald Slaybaugh and of Mrs Slaybaugh, of Topeka, Kansas. The Rev Christopher Courtauld officiated.
A reception was held at The Berkeley Hotel and the honeymoon is being spent in Jamaica.
Mr and Mrs Charles Vigors will be living permanently in Lawrence, Kansas.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Sir Charles Hastings, physician, founder of the British Medical Association, Ludlow, 1794; Sir John Macdonald, Prime Minister of Canada 1867-73 and 1878-91, Glasgow, 1815; William James, psychologist, New York, 1842; George Curzon, Marquess Curzon of Kedleston, Viceroy of India 1898-1905, Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire, 1859; Harry Gordon Selfridge, founder of the London store, Ripon, Wisconsin, 1864.

DEATHS: Sir Hans Sloane, physician and collector, London, 1753; Louis François Roubiliac, sculptor, London, 1762; Friedrich von Schlegel, philosopher and historian, Dresden, 1829; Thomas Hardy, novelist and poet, Dorchester, 1928; Caradoc Evans, writer, Aberystwyth, 1945; Hugh Gaitskell, leader of the Labour Party 1955-63, London, 1963; Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, Prime Minister of India 1964-66, Tashkent, 1966; Alberto Giacometti, sculptor, Chur, Switzerland, 1966; Richmal Crompton, author, 1969.

Charing Cross Station was opened, London, 1864.

Insulin first used successfully in the treatment of diabetes, 1922.

King Zog of Albania was dethroned, 1946.

The Open University awarded its first degrees, 1973.

PERSONAL COLUMN

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Christ is now in heaven, where he sits at the right side of God. All angels, authorities, and powers are under his control. 1 Peter 3.22 (CEV)

BIRTHS

AYRES - On December 6th 1998 at Lewisham Hospital to Katie and Martyn, a daughter Elisabeth Jane.

BUDDEN - On December 18th 1998 to Fiona (née Halpin) and James, a daughter Scarlett Eliza.

DEICHES - On December 12th 1998, to Louisa (née Clayton) and Jean-Luc, a son, Roddy James.

DENNE - On January 4th 1999, to Fenella (née Fox) and John, a son, Alexander Llewellyn.

HIGGINS - On 5th January 1999 at St. John's Hospital Chelmsford, to Kerry (née Humphries) and Barrie, a son, George Richard.

MARTIN - On New Year's Eve 1998, to Nicola (née Stenhouse) and Patrick, a son, George William, a brother for Harry, born on 12th March 1996.

OTTINO - On January 5th, at Oxford, to Joanne Bass and Simon Ottino, a son, Solomon Tyler Bass.

REID - On December 23rd to Robert Nicki (née Barclay Jacobs), a daughter (Olivia Madeline), a sister for Hugo and Alexander.

RENNY - On January 4th 1999 to Tilly (née Channon) and Mark, a daughter, Olivia Constance.

DEATHS

BENETT - Morris Charles MC, died 8th January 1999 at home after a long illness aged 84 years. Husband of the late Margarita Benett. Cremation to be held at Kensal Green Crematorium, Harrow Road, West London on Tuesday 19th January at 3.30pm, to which all friends are respectively invited. Family flowers only but donations, if desired, to the Heart Foundation. All enquiries to J.H. Kenyon Funeral Directors. Telephone: 0171 229 3810

BUXTON - Agnes Josephine, SRN, daughter of Doctor and Mrs T Bragg, born in China, beloved wife (my joy) of Kenneth Buxton, greatly loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Endured so bravely much pain but died peacefully in hospital 3 am Friday 8th January, aged 91. Private Cremation 10am, then Thanksgiving Service at noon Friday 15th January at Greyfriars Church, Reading, followed by refreshments. No flowers. Gifts to Far East Broadcasting Association, Freepost, Worthing, BN14 17BR. "With Christ - far better" Phil.1:23.

CLOWES - Grace Louise passed away peacefully on the 6th January 1999. Funeral Service at Amersham Crematorium Tuesday 19th January at 1.30pm.

CONNOR - Dr. Paul Connor (CChem FRSC), much loved husband of Pamela and father of David, died on January 5th following a stroke. The funeral will be held at 1.00pm, Thursday, January 21st at the Chiltern Crematorium, Amersham. Family flowers only, please, but donations may be made to The Stroke Association, 61-69 Derngate, Northampton, NN1 1UE.

COOK - Dr. George Thomas, on January 8th 1999, peacefully at Ashurst Park Nursing Home, Tunbridge Wells. Beloved husband of the late Audrey Seringa Cook, much loved father of Brenda, Kenneth and Stella and a dear grandfather and great-grandfather. Funeral at Tunbridge Wells Crematorium on Tuesday January 19th at 11.00am. No flowers please, but donations to the National Osteoporosis Society, c/o E.R Hickmott & Sons, 41 Grove Hill Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1SD

To place death notices, acknowledgements or notices please call 0171 680 6880

CROSSLEY - On 2nd December 1998, in a car accident in South Africa, Moyra Louise Margaret Crossley, widow of Michael Crossley and previously widow of the late Major General Theodore Birkbeck of Anley Settle. A funeral has taken place in South Africa. Enquiries to Roger Peters, Gordon Dadds Solicitors, 80 Brook Street, Mayfair, London W1Y 2DD.

DINES - Vicky, passed away peacefully after a brave fight at St Thomas' Hospital, Lambeth on Tuesday 5th Jan 1999, aged 42 years. She was greatly loved and will be sadly missed by her husband John, son Robert and twins Sarah and Amy, her loving mum and dad, Clarita and Ernest Barber, sisters Maria and Belinda, brothers-in-law and all her loving family. Funeral service at The Chapel, Camberwell New Cemetery, Brenchley Gardens (off Forest Hill Rd) SE23 on Thursday 14th January at 1.30pm followed by interment at Camberwell Old Cemetery, Forest Hill Road, SE23. Flowers to 140 Wood Vale by 11am at the latest or donations if desired, to St Thomas' Hospital (Gullen Ward Fund), Lambeth. Cars leave Wood Vale at 1.10 pm.

HARRISON - Thomas Gerard, MBE(mil), OBE, KCSC, - very suddenly on 5th January 1999, aged 80. Requiem Mass at St Stephen's Church, Horsted Keynes at 2.00pm on 13th January, followed by burial in the Churchyard of St Giles. Family flowers only, please. Donations if desired, c/o Masters and Son, Undertakers, Lindfield, tel 01444 482107, may be made to "CAF-Milford Trust" Tom's personal charity foundation to support causes close to his heart. A Memorial Mass, to be followed by light refreshments, will be held at Farm Street Church, London, on Thursday 18th February 1999.

هكذا من الأصل

OBITUARIES

THE MARQUESS OF BRISTOL

Frederick William John Augustus Hervey, 7th Marquess of Bristol was found dead yesterday aged 44. He was born on September 15, 1954.

The Hervey family has produced several notable rogues over the centuries, from the 18th-century Earl-Bishop of Derry, who amused himself by having the plumpest parsons in his diocese race through a bog for a particularly rich and vacant living (only to give it to someone else), to the 6th Marquess, who was jailed for three years for jewellery theft in the 1930s and who decided to sell guns to the Republicans during the Spanish Civil War and then betrayed them to the Francoists. But John, son of the latter and the 7th Marquess of Bristol, could compete with any of them.

Historians and geneticists could make much of the fact that almost every aspect of John Bristol's personality and behaviour had extensive precedents in his well-documented family history, although it should be noted that the Herveys of the 19th century were models of propriety. But, whether or not he was ultimately a victim of heredity, Bristol's life remains a tragic tale of an intelligent man who destroyed himself through excess. His addictions to cocaine and heroin left him a very sick man while still in his thirties, got him sent to prison twice and played a major role in the squandering of an immense fortune.

Frederick William John Augustus Hervey was born heir to the splendours of Ickworth House in Suffolk in 1954, to Victor, 6th Marquess of Bristol and his first wife Pauline (née Bolton). The collapse of his parents' marriage when Johnny, as he was known to friends and family, was five, provided him with the classic background for later waywardness, but he was the first to point out that much of his childhood was remarkably happy. His father's second wife, Juliet Fitzwilliam, and Teddy Lambton, the race horse trainer whom his mother married after her divorce, were warm and generous step-parents.

Johnny's relationship with his father was always difficult, even if the allegation that the 6th Marquess had compelled his son to wear long white gloves on a daily basis, made by his defence QC in his trial for possession of heroin and cocaine in 1993, was, as Bristol himself claimed, the first that he had ever heard of it. His father was a cold man who considered himself above the rules governing the rest of society, and he passed these characteristics on to his son.

Johnny Hervey was educated at Harrow, where he was a contemporary of the Marquess of Blandford, who was to become his main rival as Britain's most notorious peer. He completed his education at Neuchâtel University in France, the boys' equivalent of a finishing school. At the age of 18 he inherited more than a million pounds from a trust fund. The freedom this afforded him did not combine well with the appetite for excess and the self-destructive streak he had inherited, and he quickly became involved with drugs, at first cocaine and later heroin, through a "fast" set of wealthy friends at Oxford University.

Until he was 24 Hervey managed to combine an escalating drug habit with full-time employment, at first at Donaldson's estate agents and later running a Rolls-Royce dealership and working at a small bank. But in 1978 he moved to Paris, and from that point on was essentially a man of leisure, although he liked to present himself as a successful entrepreneur. He spent prodigiously, on drugs, lavish parties, cars, helicopters and yachts, and on a succession of homes, in London, Monaco, Paris and New York.

As Hervey reached adulthood, relations with his father, always distant and stiflingly formal during his childhood, began to deteriorate badly. In 1974 his father married Yvonne Sutton. Johnny's bilious reaction was to describe his second step-mother as "some kind of under-secretary". Soon afterwards, his father stripped the family wing of Ickworth bare without informing his son, who was living there.

But perhaps the lowest point in the relationship came a few days before the young Johnny's marriage to Francesca Fisher, a 20-year-old teetotal vegetarian, in 1984. His father, then living in Monaco, took out an advertisement in *The Times* personal column to deliver an astonishing snub, announcing that he and his wife would not be attending the wedding "due to a prior engagement in London".

The following year the 6th Marquess died, and Johnny Bristol and his new wife moved into Ickworth. For a time things looked promising. He appeared to have conquered his addiction to drugs, which had led to his narrowly escaping a 15-year sentence after his arrest in New York in 1983 on charges of drug trafficking, and to have abandoned a promiscuous homosexuality which had been out in the open since around 1978. His desire to produce an heir and to settle down were clearly genuine, but it was not to be. Francesca left him for another man shortly after the move to Ickworth, and from then onwards his life spiralled downwards to disaster more or less unchecked.

In 1988 Bristol received a one-year prison sentence for attempting to smuggle cocaine into Jersey in his helicopter. The following year he was fined £3,000 for the possession of drugs. In 1990 he was deported from Australia for failing to declare his previous convictions, and in 1993 he was jailed for ten months for further drug offences. Only two days after his release he was arrested for possession of heroin. This time the court recognised that his addiction was an illness, and he was given two years' probation on condition that he received treatment for his addiction.

Meanwhile, Bristol had come into increasing conflict with the National Trust, which had taken control of Ickworth in 1956, in lieu of death duties owing on his grandfather's estate. The family had been granted free tenancy of a wing of Ickworth in perpetuity as part of the deal, but a series of disputes with their tenant culminated in 1994 when the Trust began moves to have Bristol evicted, on the grounds that he had broken the conditions of the lease. The incidents cited included attacks on visitors to Ickworth by the Marquess's dogs and his habit of racing his beloved collection of classic cars around the estate. The Trust only relented when it became apparent that Bristol was in desperately poor health.

In February 1995 Bristol was admitted to St Mary's Hospital, Paddington. The formerly corpulent marquess was now reported to weigh less than seven stone and to be unable to walk without the aid of sticks. By this stage he was a pathetic figure, who had been reduced to selling the last of his land at Ickworth to cover his debts.

Bristol was a more complex figure than the popular perception of him allowed. He was sometimes described as "charismatic" and many of his friends were in awe of him. He could be highly generous and possessed a certain arrogant and dashing charm. He was also something of a practical joker, albeit a rather sinister one. In one incident, which echoed the Earl-Bishop's celebrated race in its use of others for the Hervey amusement, he had a female American guest sail out into the lake at Ickworth in a rubber dinghy, and then sank it with his air rifle.

John Bristol had no children. His half-brother by his father's second marriage, Lord Frederick Hervey, succeeds him in the title.


The Marquess of Bristol: tragic tale of an intelligent man

SIR WILLIAM MARS-JONES

Sir William Mars-Jones, MBE, a Judge of the High Court, 1969-90, died yesterday aged 83. He was born on September 4, 1915.

Probably the stock picture that most people carried in their minds of William Mars-Jones was of a rather old-fashioned, strict and severe High Court Judge, very conscious of the dignity and importance of his office. He had tended to model himself on judges of an earlier generation — in particular on Sir Rowland Oliver who had created a great impression on him when he appeared before him as a young barrister. However, behind this façade lay a many-sided and intriguing personality of which the stern exterior was but a part.

No stranger observing him sitting on the Bench in his court could possibly have guessed that he was gazing at a superb mimic and story-teller who could "take off" all his judicial colleagues. Nor would anyone have surmised that this stern judge was a consummate guitarist who could entertain his friends with songs to his own accompaniment on either the ukelele, the guitar or the piano.

In his boyhood days at Denbigh County School he was known as Bill the Post - this name derived from the fact that his father, the later Alderman Henry Mars Jones, sometime chairman of the Denbighshire County Council and considerable local potentate, ran the post office in the little village of Llansannan in the Hiraethog hills, as well as numerous other enterprises all based on that centre.

At school, William Lloyd Mars-Jones was greatly influenced by two of his teachers at Denbigh School. The first was the headmaster, W. A. Evans, a strict disciplinarian and believer in the work ethic. The other, who had an even greater influence upon him, was Stan Rees, who was subsequently to become a famous headmaster himself at Llanelli Grammar School. At Denbigh, Rees was the English master and he regularly imparted to his pupils a great love of English literature together with his own command of the Welsh art of the raconteur (of which he was an even greater exponent than Mars-Jones himself), to say nothing of his feelings of loyalty to University College, Aberystwyth.

It was to that college's law faculty, then under the guidance of its inspirational head, Professor Thomas Levi, that Mars-Jones went from Denbigh School. At Aberystwyth he distinguished himself academically (taking a first in Law), politically (becoming president of the Union) and in the entertainment world — forming a famous double-act with Dr Reginald Thomas, sometime thereafter the Minister of the Brick Church on Fifth Avenue in New York.

From Aberystwyth Mars-Jones moved on to St John's College, Cambridge. There, pursuing his theatrical interests, he soon became a prominent member of the famous Cambridge Footlights. In the meantime he had joined Gray's Inn but, before he could be called to the Bar, the Second World War intervened. Mars-Jones joined the Navy and was called to the Bar at Gray's Inn in bell-bottom trousers in 1939. He eventually became a lieutenant-commander and was appointed MBE (military) in 1945.

On his return from the war Mars-Jones stood as a Labour candidate in the 1945 election for his native constituency of West Denbigh. He ran a most amusing and vigorous campaign rather in tandem with his Liberal opponent and opposed to the sitting Conservative member, Sir Henry Morris-Jones. The latter won with a relatively small majority with Mars-Jones and Garner Evans, the Liberal, splitting the Opposition vote fairly evenly. There is little doubt that, had Mars-Jones succeeded in winning the seat, he would have had a distinguished parliamentary career. Yet his failure to pursue the life of politics was not really surprising; the impression he gave was of having few political ideas of his own. He came from a traditionally Liberal background and his adherence to the Labour Party depended very much on a liberal interpretation of socialist doctrine.

After the general election he joined the Wales and Chester circuit and established a large practice from the chambers of the late Lord Justice Arthian Davies at 1 Farrar's Building in the Temple. One of Mars-Jones's greatest qualities was his loyalty to friends and institutions, and there was no doubting his unswerving loyalty to his old circuit. He joined it at a time when it was the custom to "follow the circuit" from Assize town to Assize town through each of the counties of Wales and Cheshire.

There was a close camaraderie between the members and the vintage of the two decades following the war was very good. Many of the members distinguished themselves as advocates, judges or as politicians — and circuit life was happy, if tumultuous. Mars-Jones served his circuit in many ways: he was its junior in his early days, subsequently he became its leader and eventually its presiding judge. Shortly before his retirement he was unanimously elected an honorary life member.

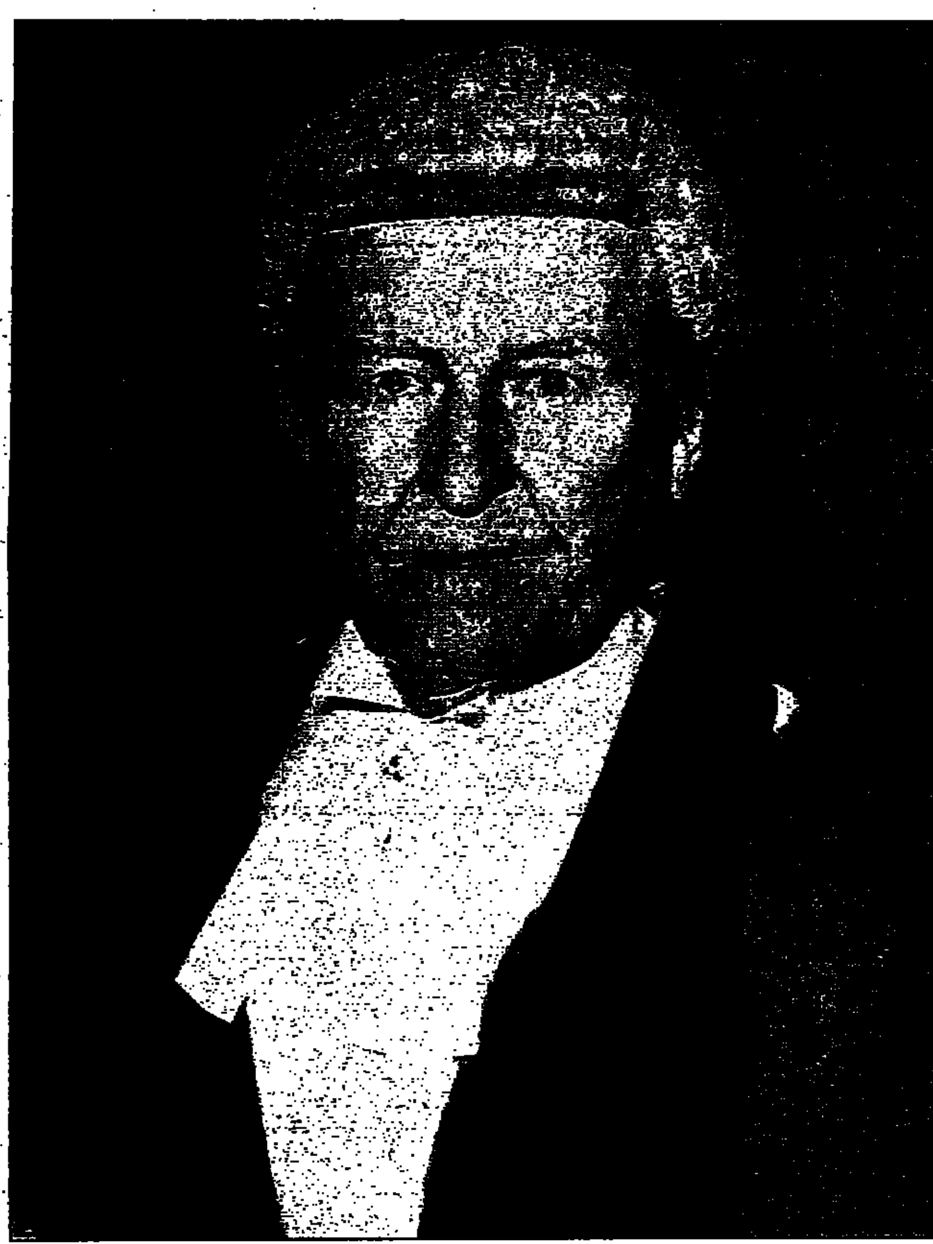
He was a formidable and tenacious advocate and a sound lawyer. He had a tremendous capacity for work and mastered every case in which he was involved thoroughly. Extremely methodical in his approach, he tended to probe every point in a case rather than go for the jugular. His opponents learnt to respect his application and courage and his determination in the interests of his client. His reputation among solicitors was that he was a great fighter for his side. What he lacked in discrimination he made up for in sheer tenacity. His weapon was the broadsword rather than the rapier. His opponents learnt that they could never take anything for granted if they had Bill Mars-Jones against them. He was a successful and admired advocate taking silk in 1957 and leading for the prosecution or the defence in a number of well-known criminal trials — he prosecuted in the notorious Moors Murder trial of 1965 — as well as in a variety of civil cases

It came as no surprise when he was appointed to the High Court Bench in 1962. There he served in the Queen's Bench Division for the next 21 years (there never seems to have been much question of promotion). But his methods as an advocate did not desert him when he moved to the judicial sphere. He applied himself with equal vigour and care to mastering the detail of a case from the judicial chair. He was extremely methodical in his approach, very even-handed and with an ability to create an imposing "atmosphere" in his court.

He was not a great and creative lawyer but no one could better him at following the detail of evidence in a complicated case and presenting it in a direct and concise form to a jury. His sympathetic summing-up was thought to have had a good deal to do with the acquittal at the Old Bailey of the actor John Bindon on a murder charge in 1979; but there was never any doubt that he could be stern and forbidding — as he certainly was when he sentenced the Arab terrorist, Nezar Hinsawi, to 45 years' imprisonment (said to be the longest sentence ever imposed by a British court) for trying to blow up an El Al jumbo jet in 1986. He retired from the Bench at the age of 75 in 1990, but was still to be seen in the Garrick Club. From his earliest days at the Bar he lived in Gray's Inn with his devoted wife Sheila. He was very proud to have been Treasurer of the Inn in 1982, but took almost equal pride in his presidency, starting in 1995, of the University College of North Wales, Bangor.

He threw himself with his customary enthusiasm and vigour into a very successful campaign to raise private money for that distinguished Welsh academic institution. Naturally Welsh-speaking, he was elected an honorary White Bard of the Gorsedd of Bards of the Welsh National Eisteddfod in 1971 and was made an honorary LLD of the University of Wales in 1973.

His wife's death nearly a year ago came as a great blow to him, particularly as, with growing physical disabilities, he had become ever more dependent upon her. He leaves three sons, the middle one of whom, Adam Mars-Jones, is the novelist and short-story writer.


Mars-Jones: a judge of the old school, conscious of the dignity of his office

THE RIGHT REV FRANK WEST

The Right Rev Francis (Frank) West, Suffragan Bishop of Taunton, 1962-77, died on January 2 aged 89. He was born on January 9, 1909.

TALL, handsome and gifted with extraordinary charm, Frank West exercised an effective ministry in Anglican Orders at various levels. Early in life he found a call to ordination, partly through discovering, while taking part in a university mission, his gift for friendship among the workers in an industrial area of Halifax; and, although his work eventually took him to rather more rural spheres, he never lost his ability to get close to "ordinary" people.

A Central churchman with a feel for history and a well-furnished mind, he knew better than most what was meant by a Church that was both Catholic and Reformed, while understanding equally the value of continuity and the necessity for innovation. He could lead worship and preach incisive sermons in such a way as to address the modern world with the wisdom and dignity of tradition.

It was the same with his writing. He produced six or seven books, small but distinguished, on aspects of the Church's history, some involving original research in archives. He also published an able portrait of the famous F. R. Barry, the Bishop of Southwell who made West an archdeacon in his diocese. When he retired to Aldbourne near Marlborough, he added a privately printed history of its lovely church to his published works.

Francis Horner West went to Berkhamsted School, read history and theology at Magdalene College, Cambridge, and trained for the ministry at Ridley Hall, returning there as Chaplain and Tutor after a happy curacy in the industrial parish of Burmantofts, Leeds, in the Ripon diocese. There followed a move to the York diocese with the incumbency of Starbeck, and, while he was there, the beginning of his service as a Chaplain to the Forces.

Early in the war he was wounded in France when his batman was killed; but he returned to further active service, in North Africa, Italy, and South East Asia (where he was mentioned in dispatches). He was then heavily involved in arranging, and lecturing in, postwar courses — held abroad and in England — for prospective ordinands from the Forces.

In 1946 he returned to civilian clerical life and went to the Southwell diocese to become vicar of Upton. While still at Upton, West was made Archdeacon of Newark, and from 1947 exercised this strenuous ministry for 15 years, combining it with responsiblity first for Upton and then, from 1951, for East Retford, where he also served as rural dean. In 1962, at the invitation of the Bishop of Bath and Wells, he changed dioceses again to become Suffragan Bishop of Taunton, combining his episcopal duties there for the first nine years with ministering to Dinder, a tiny country parish south-east of Wells, and throughout the whole 15-year period occupying a prebendal stall in the cathedral.

He retired in 1977 to Aldbourne, after 15 years as a bishop, a period during which he established an especially effective ministry in schools, where he showed a real talent for engaging the young in constructive dialogue. There had been times, both as an archdeacon and as a bishop, when the load of work or the rivalry of the ambitious nearly broke him; but Beryl, his able and devoted wife, whom he had married in 1947 while still at Upton, was a constant source of support — becoming his life-line when age and infirmity overtook him. She survives him, together with a son and a daughter.



Latest wills

Lord **Smith**, of Marlow Common, Marlow, Buckinghamshire, left estate valued at £502,101 net.

Lord **Terrington**, former member of the Stock Exchange, partner in Sheppards and Chase, 1952-80, of Fairford, Gloucestershire, left estate valued at £200,000 net.

Lady **Wakefield**, wife of Sir Norman Wakefield, of Brownshill, Stroud, Gloucestershire, left estate valued at £154,321 net.

Lady **Fairley** of Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, left estate valued at £592,902 net.

Santina Maria **Haffkin**, of Harrow, Middlesex, left estate valued at £2,150,751 net.

Freda Bridget **Wilson**, of Belstead, Ipswich, left estate valued at £2,416,151 net. She left £500 to both Belstead Church and Blaxhall Church.

Anne **Banks**, of Chorley, Lancashire, left estate valued at £1,615,220 net. She left £500 to the RSPCA; £200 to the RNIB and to the Parish Church of St George, Chorley.

Thomas George **Blumsom**, of Chalfont St Giles, Buckinghamshire, left estate valued at £1,261,791 net.

Elizabeth Rogers **Bull**, of Dallington, Northampton, left estate valued at £1,090,827 net. She left £10,000 to the RNIB and to the National Trust.

Francis Ludwig **Carsten**, of London, left estate valued at £1,262,123 net.

Raymond Maxwell **Ellis**, of Ettingshall Park, Wolverhampton, left estate valued at £1,138,721 net.

Sylvia Mary **Groves**, of Erdington, Birmingham, left estate valued at £1,728,138 net.

Florence Mary **Hothersall**, of London SW20, left estate valued at £1,053,372 net.

Juliet Nancy Auldjo **Jamieson**, of Blackwater, Camberley, Surrey, left estate valued at £1,613,741 net.

Brigadier Thomas Neil **McMicking**, of London W8, left estate valued at £739,650 net.

Gillian **Pemberton**, of London SW19, left estate valued at £1,174,029 net.

She left £1,000 to St John's Church, Spencer Hill, Wimbledon.

Rachel Dorothy **Sharman**, of Lymington, Hampshire, left estate valued at £1,277,774 net.

She left £5,000 to the British Red Cross Society; £1,000 each to British Heart Foundation, Imperial Cancer Research Campaign, RNIB, RNID, Royal UK Beneficent Association, Abbeyfield Society, Distressed Gentlefolk's Aid Association, Leonard Cheshire Foundation, Council for the Protection of Rural England and the National Trust.

Stephen Carey **Stedman**, farmer, of Woolston, North Cadbury, Yeovil, Somerset, left estate valued at £1,128,366 net.

Fanny Elizabeth **Stevenson**, of Yeadon, Leeds, left estate valued at £1,038,686 net.

Nathan **Storz**, of Hendon, London NW4, left estate valued at £1,073,717 net.

Eileen May Ayliffe **Tate**, of Bishops Hull, Taunton, Somerset, left estate valued at £1,037,688 net.

Nicola Georgina **Taylor**, of Llangynidr, Crickhowell, Powys, left estate valued at £1,240,040 net.

Robert Woodhead **Wadsworth**, of Anlaby, East Yorkshire, left estate valued at £1,136,873 net.

PASSING OF AN 'ENORMOUS NAME'

ON THIS DAY

January 11, 1873

At the heart of a long article on Louis Napoleon III was embedded one explanation of the Emperor's nephews failure to match the achievements of his uncle.

We now see, though few saw then, that the ship which brought home the body of Napoleon to be laid under the gorgeous dome of the Invalides did in effect bring home his nephew. Meanwhile, this strange, meditative, inscrutable man, dark to others, often, doubtless, to himself, was learning everywhere, everything. In long captivity, in Switzerland and in our Metropolis, he had nothing to do but that which Princes often cannot do — to read, observe, think and learn, and watch the star of his destiny. Within the sphere of thought and feeling the man who can think, and feel, and intend, and design is an autocrat. He wants no advisers; he depends on no informers; he is bound to no agents; he is all in all — the first and last in his mental realm. That was the late Emperor's education, as careful when it depended on himself and Fortune as when an Emperor, a nation, and a Royal mother gave their heart and soul to it. It prepared him for Empire, but not, as we now see, for Constitutional Government; and not, as we now still more plainly see, for the qualities necessary to success under the overwhelming difficulties of unexpected and unexampled prosperity. It prepared him for *plebiscites* and *coups d'état*, a portfolio teeming with schemes, new maps of Europe, rectified frontiers, "wars for ideas" repaid with territory, intrigues, demonstrations, vast material undertakings, and, in all things, a regard to that which pleases the fancy and meets the eye. It prepared him for the pageant and the scene, but not for the stern realities of all life, whether public or private — not for the successes only attainable by the full tension and continual exercise of the highest moral and mental faculties. A student may learn, a dreamer may have visions, a thinker may arrive at conclusions or collect and arrange ideas; but if they have to spend the best part of their lives out of the action of life, watching, observing, and patiently expecting, they will be sure to find that when the opportunity does arise they cannot deal with men, except as the bloodless creatures of their own ideal world. For 20 years the world saw, with continual misgiving, the outburst of a long pent-up power, the very Summer of Empire full of leaf and flower; the very Autumn ripening everywhere to decay. France was to be dazzled with a succession of grand displays, from the fantastic shows of a Palace, enormous *fêtes*, unequalled Exhibitions, and the chase itself transformed into a forest masquerade, to wars and threats of war, in which glory was the only prize . . .

NEWS

Blair supports Cook
Tony Blair appealed to voters to rise above the personal shortcomings of his ministers after Robin Cook's former wife published an intimate and embarrassing account of their failed marriage. The Prime Minister said that British politics was in danger of being relegated to little more than a gossip column, "an extension of Hollywood", if ministers' private lives remained relentlessly under the microscope......Pages 1, 4, 5

Government could pay nurses more
The Government could comfortably afford an above-average pay increase *for Britain's nurses, in spite of the threat of economic* recession this year, according to City forecasts. The predictions suggest that the Government is heading for a budget surplus of up to £10 billion this year because tax receipts have been far higher than expected......Page 1

Marquess dead
The Marquess of Bristol, who scandalised society with his debauchery and drug abuse, has died suddenly at his Suffolk home, aged 44......Page 1

Europe crisis
Jacques Santer goes efore the European Parliament with his 19 commissioners tonight in an attempt to defuse a censure vote that is certain to inflict heavy political damage......Page 1

Speaker may go
Betty Boothroyd is considering springing a surprise on the Commons by standing down as Speaker before the next election. Page 1

Government relaunch
Senior Cabinet ministers will this week unveil a string of policy initiatives as part of a mini government relaunch designed to wrest the agenda off personalities and onto issues......Page 2

Still smiling
The Irish will be taught to be friendlier in a £250,000 government campaign intended to improve the country's reputation for hospitality......Page 3

Kidnap ordeal
Tense negotiations continued for the release of John Brooke, the kidnapped oil worker, after Yemeni ministers promised Britain they will not use force......Page 3

Chinese choice
Milton Keynes, best known until now for its concrete cows and American-style shopping malls, has become the most popular destination in Britain for people who left Hong Kong......Page 6

Mother's shock
Maureen Kearney, a 65-year-old grandmother, was in a West Belfast shopping centre when she spotted the man she blames for the s killing of her son......Page 7

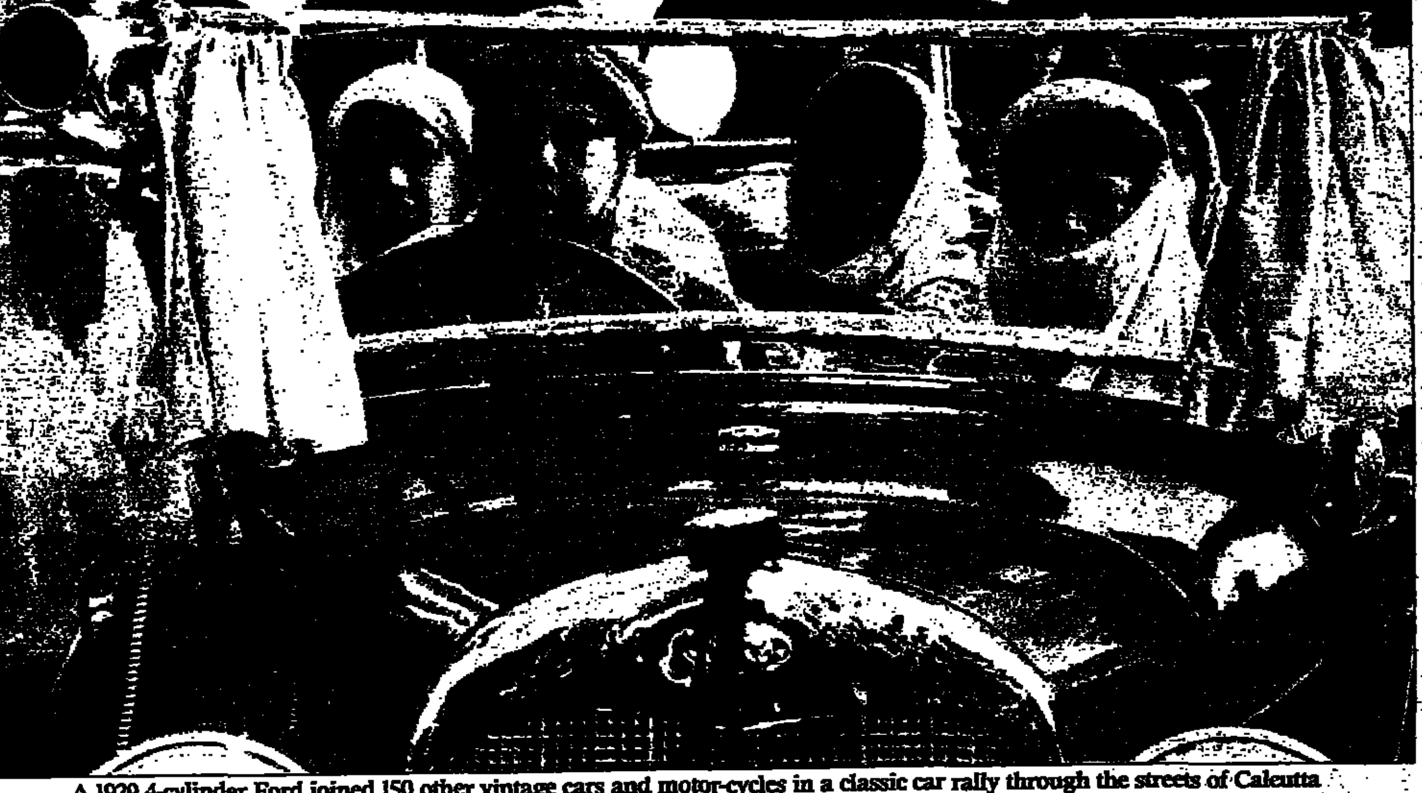
Out of balance
A group set up at the Government's request to help employees and employers to achieve a better balance between work and family life is threatening to become a major embarrassment t......Page 8

Atrocity alert
The Indian Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, visited western India in an attempt to curb a wave of atrocities against Christians......Page 9

Clinton DNA test
DNA tests on the 13-year-old Arkansas boy rumoured to be President Clinton's illegitimate son have proved negative......Page 10

Saddam defiant
President Saddam Hussein gained popular support when Iraq's rubber-stamp parliament urged his Government to reject "unjust" UN resolutions...Page 11

Tintin, the man of the century
Tintin celebrated his seventieth birthday amid agreement in the French-speaking world on his heroic status and fierce debate over his sexuality and politics. The media devoted much time to a portrayal of the Belgian cartoon character as a figure who towered above the 20th century with just one rival, General Charles de Gaulle......Page 10



A 1929 4-cylinder Ford joined 150 other vintage cars and motor-cycles in a classic car rally through the streets of Calcutta

BUSINESS

Merger: The catastrophic fall in the crude oil price has forced two former enemies, Enterprise Oil and Lasmo, into discussions that could lead to a £2.3 billion merger of their companies......Page 48

Newspapers: Trinity, the UK's largest regional newspaper group, pulled out of merger talks with Mirror Group for a second time, amid rumours of disputes in the Mirror camp......Page 48

Millennium: Fears are growing that efforts by large companies to protect their businesses from the millennium bug could lead to a rapid boom followed by a bust at the turn of the century. Evidence is emerging of stockpiling in both raw materials and products as firms attempt *to ringfence operations*......Page 45

Age trap: Ageism should make us angry. Tom Kirkwood, professor of biological gerontology, says: "Someone said that we are born copies and develop into originals. Older people's life experience make them unique"......Pages 14, 15

Lisa Armstrong: "In the immediate excitement that greeted Tom Ford's hippy spring collection for Gucci last October, the models' hair seemed a minor footnote. But hair and make-up are never details in a business where a clever cut at the right moment can make a model's career and launch a million imitations." Suddenly it's OK to be a Seventies girl......Pages 16, 17

Hot tickets: From Hollywood to the West End, from the Tate Gallery to *the Barbican, Times* critics choose their highlights......Pages 18, 19

On film: Warren Beatty stars as a sleazy US Senator in *Bulworth*, while Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman team up to cast a spell in *Practical Magic* and Joseph Fiennes impersonates the Bard in *Shakespeare in Love*......Page 18

At the theatre: Cate Blanchett, Richard Dreyfuss, Rufus Sewell and Klaus Maria Brandauer star on the London stage......Page 18

In the galleries: The Tate's large retrospective of Jackson Pollock looks unmissable, while the Monet exhibition at the Royal Academy is set to be the new year's most popular art show......Page 19

Leaders: Gianluca Vialli, the Chelsea player-coach, poured scorn on *the continuing efforts of Ruud Gullit* to undermine the achievement of taking his team to the top...Page 25

Football: Manchester United closed the gap on the Premiership leaders when they comfortably defeated West Ham United 4-1 at Old Trafford......Page 29

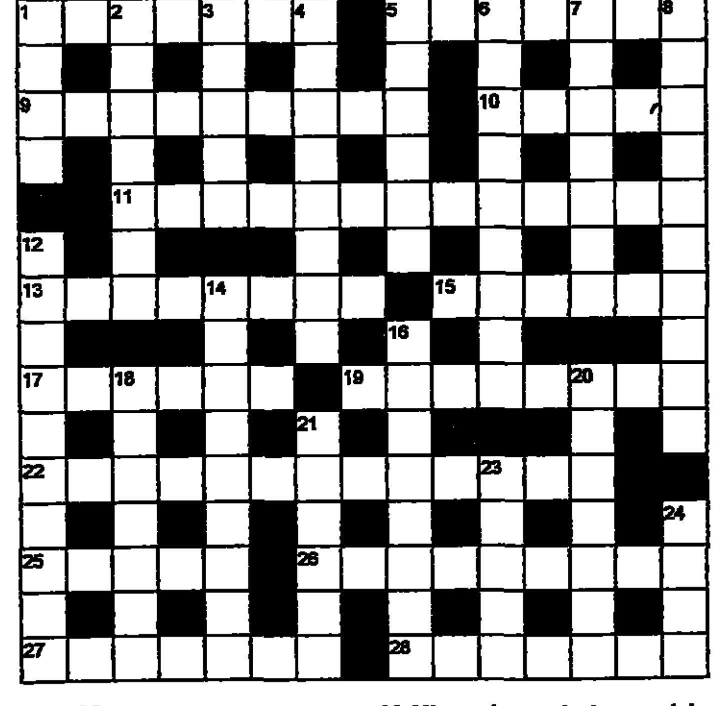
Cricket: Man of the match Alan *Mullally spurred England to a* tense eight-run win against Australia in the first of the triangular one-day series at Brisbane......Page 27

Rugby Union: In the shock of the Tetley Bitter Cup fourth round, Henley travelled to Bedford and thoroughly deserved their famous 29-22 victory......Page 34

Simon Barnes: The wives are in agony, not just because they married a darts players - a tough enough break in all conscience - but also because their man is now up there pinging in the 180s......Page 33

Tennis: Tim Henman, expected to win the final of the Qatar Open in Doha against Germany's Rainer *Schuttler, lost 6-4, 5-7, 6-1 to a player* more than a hundred places below him......Page 26

1, 15, 23, 34, 37, 40. Bonus: 45. Two tickets shared £8.9m; 16 won £171,189 for five numbers and the bonus; 810 won £2,113 for five numbers; 42,188 won £89 for four; and 801,662 won £10 for three.



TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

ARTS
■ A new label: Brian Griffiths and other artists are leading the way in what's being termed Neurotic Realism

LAW
■ How long before the American-style compensation culture conquers Britain?

Preview: A new series of *Dad* (BBC1, 8.30pm). **Review:** *Shooting the Past* was a curate's egg, says Paul Hoggart......Pages 46, 47

The Cook book
The Cabinet would not be the stronger for Mr Cook's departure. One hope around which the Labour leadership should rally is that this thorny but talented minister can bring an end to the time when he has been an understandably distracted man......Page 21

Nursing for nurses
Nursing reform is not only a necessary part of the Government's modernisation project, but also a pressing political need if cries of "crisis" are not to continue to emanate from hospital wards......Page 21

Ever young
Older people are being brought back to the workplace. Their experience enriches us......Page 21

WILLIAM REES-MOGG
The similarity of the psychological dramas of Cook and Clinton is most striking. Cast both stories as novels, and ask what is the core of the plot......Page 20

PETER RIDDELL
The striking feature of the latest polls is how little impact the Mandelson affair has had on public opinion, not how much. The ratings of Mr Blair and Labour are still much higher than at the last election......Page 20

7th Marquess of Bristol; Sir William Mars-Jones, judge; **the Right Rev Francis West**......Page 23

Christ as Che Guevara advert; call for honesty on euro; Roman dates; Cromwell's escutcheon; pig farmers' plight......Page 21

For Washington to make use of a body that has been created by the Security Council of the UN for a specific purpose is not only to thumb one's nose at the world body but to abandon all moral scruples while arguing, cynically, from the moral high ground
— *Hong Kong Standard*

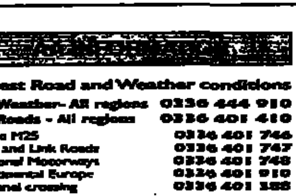
THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,997

ACROSS
1 Go like the clappers? (7).
5 Change subject, having no time to relax in lodgings (7).
9 A nice long novel suited to one's tastes (9).
10 Stage entertainment – originally one an agent rejected (5).
11 Facing similar difficulties, like George and Montmorency (2,3,4,4).
13 Continental production of English opera, oddly in a French setting (8).
15 Keen to make an impression securing *runs* (6).
17 He's abandoned the children in lots of cells (6).
19 First-rate judge takes a wife? It's hard to say (5-3).
22 How some may play golf, all day and all night (5,3,5).
25 His work was in bars and involved lager (5).
26 Quite bold, developing philosophical argument (9).
27 Have right to change character at start of book (7).
28 Expression of surprise about unknown person in list (7).

DOWN
1 Principal male removed from head of procession (4).
2 Pair taking in little orphan found in basket (7).
3 Spy from army set-up securing information (5).
4 Approach requiring energy and method (8).
5 Money offered by artist upset model at first (6).
6 Change to e.g. crime figures may be described thus (9).
7 Something very ugly, such as a sty? (7).
8 Will not admit Tory outsiders into this depressed area (10).
12 Paper addressed point in support *of landlord* (10).
14 City may be devastated by his sacking (9).
16 Plant giving badger, say, a lot of abdominal pain (8).
18 Aboard ship, for example, put up with slander and smears (7).
20 Coins go into it and notes come out (7).
21 Money order that's written in Italian and French (6).
23 Bribed picture editor (5).
24 Endlessly investigate breeding establishment (4).

Times Two Crossword, page 48

The solution of Saturday's Prize Puzzle No 20,996 will appear next Saturday. The five winners will each receive a £20 book token.



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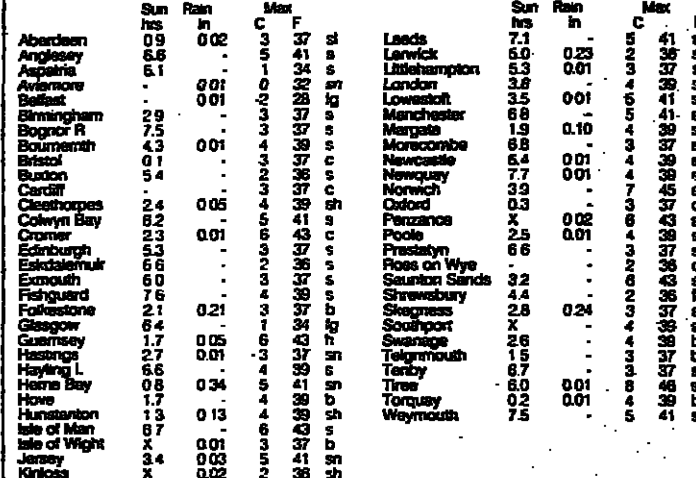
Calls are charged at 50p per minute at all times.

Sun rises: 8.02 am
Sun sets: 4.14 pm
Moon sets: 12.27pm
Moon rises: 1.49 am
New moon: January 17th

London 4.14 pm to 8.02 am
Bristol 4.24 pm to 8.12 am
Edinburgh 4.03 pm to 8.37 am
Manchester 4.13 pm to 8.20 am
Penzance 4.42 pm to 8.18 am



☐ **General:** very cold but mostly dry. Light flurries of sleet or snow in eastern England, most likely towards the North Sea coast.
☐ **London, SE, E & NE England, E Anglia:** mostly cloudy with scattered sleet and snow showers. Wind NE, moderate to fresh. Max 4C (39F).
☐ **Central S & Central N England, Midlands:** some wintry showers, mostly dry with some sunny breaks. Wind NE, moderate to fresh. Max 4C (39F).
☐ **Channel Islands, SW & NW England, Wales, Lake District, Isle of Man:** mostly dry with sunny spells. Wind NE, moderate to fresh. Max 5C (41F).
☐ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Central Highlands, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Orkney, Shetland:** Freezing fog slowly clearing. Sunny spells. Wind light, variable to S. Max 4C (39F).
☐ **SW & NW Scotland, Glasgow, Argyll:** early freezing fog patches, then dry and bright before rain starts moving into the western fringes. Wind S, moderate. Max 4C (39F).
☐ **N. Ireland:** any early freezing fog slowly clearing to sunny spells. Cloudier with rain and sleet in west later. Wind light and variable. Max 3C (37F).
☐ **Republic of Ireland:** frosty start, freezing fog in places. Some sunshine. Rain with snow on hills in evening. Wind light, variable, to strong S. Max -1C (30F)
☐ **Outlook:** rain and sunny spells.



24 hrs to 6 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gales; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	F	
Aberdeen	0.9	0.02	3	37	sl
Anglesey	6.6	-	5	41	s
Aspatria	6.1	-	1	34	s
Aviemore	-	0.01	0	32	sn
Belfast	-	0.01	-2	28	fg
Birmingham	2.9	-	3	37	s
Bognor R	7.5	-	3	37	s
Bournemth	4.3	0.01	4	39	s
Bristol	0.1	-	3	37	c
Buxton	5.4	-	2	36	s
Cardiff	-	-	3	37	c
Cleethorpes	2.4	0.05	4	39	sh
Colwyn Bay	6.2	-	5	41	s
Cromer	2.3	0.01	6	43	c
Edinburgh	5.3	-	3	37	s
Eskdalemuir	6.6	-	2	36	s
Exmouth	6.0	-	3	37	s
Fishguard	7.6	-	4	39	s
Folkestone	2.1	0.21	3	37	b
Glasgow	6.4	-	1	34	fg
Guernsey	1.7	0.05	6	43	h
Hastings	2.7	0.01	3	37	sn
Hayling I.	6.6	-	4	39	s
Herne Bay	0.8	0.34	5	41	sn
Hove	1.7	-	4	39	b
Hunstanton	1.3	0.13	4	39	sh
Isle of Man	6.7	-	6	43	s
Isle of Wight	X	0.01	3	37	b
Jersey	3.4	0.03	5	41	sn
Kinloss	X	0.02	2	36	sh
Leeds	7.1	-	5	41	s
Lerwick	6.0	0.23	2	36	sl
Littlehampton	5.3	0.01	3	37	s
London	3.8	-	4	39	s
Lowestoft	3.5	0.01	5	41	sh
Manchester	6.8	-	5	41	s
Margate	1.9	0.10	4	39	sn
Morecombe	6.8	-	3	37	s
Newcastle	6.4	0.01	4	39	s
Newquay	7.7	0.01	4	39	s
Norwich	3.9	-	7	45	s
Oxford	0.3	-	3	37	c
Penzance	X	0.02	6	43	s
Poole	2.5	0.01	4	39	s
Prestatyn	6.6	-	3	37	s
Ross on Wye	-	-	2	36	du
Saunton Sands	3.2	-	6	43	s
Shrewsbury	4.4	-	2	36	fg
Skegness	2.8	0.24	3	37	sl
Southport	X	-	4	39	s
Swanage	2.6	-	4	39	b
Teignmouth	1.5	-	3	37	b
Tenby	6.7	-	3	37	s
Tiree	6.0	0.01	8	46	s
Torquay	0.2	0.01	4	39	b
Weymouth	7.5	-	5	41	s

Yesterday's highest day temp. Tiree, Inner Hebrides, 8C (46F); Lowest Belfast -2C (28F); Rain Herne Bay 0.34ins; Sun Newquay 7.7hrs.

	C	F	
Ajaccio	16	61	f
Akrotiri	18	64	f
Alex'dria	18	64	s
Algiers	18	64	s
Amst'dm	6	43	r
Athens	16	61	s
Bahrain	24	75	s
Bangkok	29	84	f
Barbados	28	82	s
Barcelona	14	57	f
Beirut	16	61	f
Belgrade	9	48	s
Berlin	3	37	r
Bermuda	19	66	c
Biarritz	13	55	r
Bordeaux	12	54	d
Brussels	7	45	f
Budapest	3	37	f
B Aires	29	84	f
Beijing	-4	25	s
Cairo	17	63	c
Cape Tn	25	77	s
Chicago	-7	19	s
Ch'church	X		
Cologne	6	43	c
C'phagn	1	34	f
Corfu	13	55	f
Dublin	5	41	s
Dubrovnik	12	54	f
Faro	18	64	s
Florence	10	50	f
Frankfurt	8	46	f
Funchal	19	66	f
Geneva	9	48	c
Gibraltar	21	70	s
Helsinki	-7	19	sn
Hong K	18	64	s
Innsbruck	4	39	f
Istanbul	10	50	s
Jeddah	18	64	c
Jo'burg	20	68	f
L Palmas	19	66	f
Le Touqt	8	46	f
Lisbon	16	61	f
Locarno	8	46	f
L Angeles	13	55	s
Luxembg	5	41	r
Luxor	19	66	f
Madrid	7	45	s
Majorca	15	59	s
Malaga	21	70	s
Malta	16	61	f
Melbourne	22	72	f
Mexico C	19	66	s
Miami	25	77	s
Milan	7	45	c
Montreal	-9	16	f
Moscow	-9	16	f
Munich	6	43	r
Nairobi	27	81	f
Naples	14	57	c
N Delhi	11	52	fg
N York	-4	25	s
Nice	13	55	f
Oslo	-7	19	f
Paris	7	45	f
Perth	38	100	s
Prague	4	39	f
Reykjavik	-1	30	s
Rhodes	16	61	s
Rio de J	28	82	s
Riyadh	23	73	s
Rome	11	52	c
Salzburg	4	39	r
S Frisco	8	46	s
Santiago	28	82	s
S Paulo	X		
Seoul	-6	21	s
Singapore	28	82	f
Stockholm	-4	25	f
Strasb'rg	8	46	f
Sydney	27	81	s
Tangier	17	63	s
Tel Aviv	17	63	s
Tenerife	18	64	d
Tokyo	5	41	c
Toronto	-10	14	c
Tunis	17	63	f
Valencia	17	63	s
Vanc'ver	6	43	r
Venice	5	41	fg
Vienna	6	43	c
Warsaw	3	37	c
Wash'ton	-4	25	s
Wel'gton	19	66	X
Zurich	7	45	c

Temperatures at midday local time on Friday X = not available



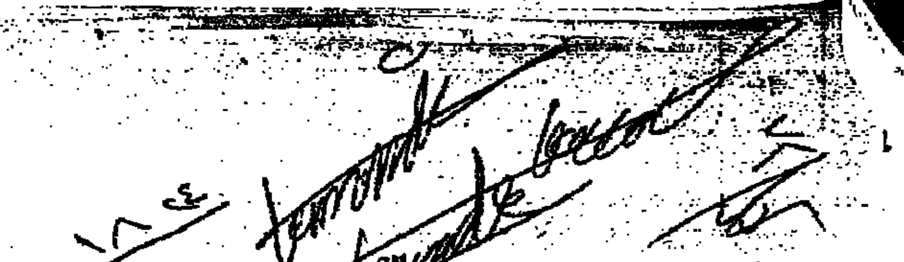
Changes to chart below from noon: High B remains slow moving. Low H moves NW, Low J deepens NE, Low G fills and drifts E



TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	7:27	3.5	7:44	3.6
Avonmouth	0:16	10.2	12:38	10.2
Belfast	5:07	2.8	5:21	3.1
Cardiff	0:02	9.8	12:24	9.5
Devonport	11:01	4.5	11:48	4.3
Dover	4:33	5.7	5:12	5.3
Dublin	5:46	3.4	6:13	3.5
Falmouth	10:32	4.3	11:19	4.1
Greenock	6:13	2.9	5:56	3.1
Harwich	4:58	3.3	5:39	3.2
Holyhead	4:09	4.4	4:27	4.6
Hull (Albert D)	-	-	12:02	7.0
Ilfracombe	11:38	7.2	-	-
King's Lynn	-	-	12:35	4.9
Leith	8:34	4.5	9:00	4.6
Liverpool	4:46	7.5	5:10	7.5
London Bridge	7:16	6.0	7:54	6.0
Lowestoft	2:46	2.3	4:12	2.1
Margate	5:24	4.1	6:11	3.9
Milford Haven	11:57	5.4	-	-
Newquay	10:57	5.5	11:35	5.3
Oban	11:21	3.1	-	-
Penzance	10:25	4.5	11:08	4.3
Portland	0:01	1.3	12:07	1.4
Portsmouth	5:22	4.0	5:39	3.7
Shoreham	4:50	5.1	4:56	4.9
Southampton	4:47	3.8	5:06	3.6
Swansea	-	-	12:03	10.3
Tees	8:49	9.0	10:06	9.1
Walton-On-Naze	5:03	3.6	5:42	3.5

All times GMT. Heights in metres.

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New season, same old Henman

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A new column on golf

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ONE DAY AT A TIME

England begin recovery programme

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ULSTER'S TRIUMPH

Irish spring a European surprise

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MONDAY JANUARY 11 1999

CHELSEA MANAGER HAS HARD WORDS FOR PREDECESSOR

Vialli shakes an iron fist at Gullit's barbs

BY OLIVER HOLT
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

WITH the gentle assuredness that has become the trademark of his success, Gianluca Vialli, the Chelsea player-coach, poured scorn last night on the continuing efforts of Ruud Gullit, his predecessor, to undermine his achievements. In the process, he emphasised, perhaps unwittingly, the reasons why he has taken Chelsea to heights that the Dutchman never attained.

Vialli, the man who has taken Chelsea from strength to strength since Gullit's abrupt departure from Stamford Bridge 11 months ago, had raised a clenched fist into the air in celebration at St James' Park on Saturday evening after his side had clinched the gritty yet composed 1-0 victory over Gullit's Newcastle United that allowed them to overtake Aston Villa at the top of the FA Carling Premiership.

It was their twentieth league game without defeat, a run that stretches back to August 15, the opening day of the season. It was a game that established a new club record for an unbeaten run, a game that most observers agreed they would never have won during Gullit's tempestuous time at the helm.

Slowly, almost irresistibly, their form is beginning to take its toll on the rest. Villa, still genuine contenders, are slipping a little. Arsenal are beset by injuries and disciplinary problems. Manchester United — forced to wait for 45 minutes by a power failure yesterday but comfortably bright enough to beat a poor West Ham United 4-1 at Old Trafford — are now third, but are not yet playing with the fluency of potential champions.

Much of Chelsea's success is to do with the team spirit that Vialli has fostered, the lack of ego that has salved the relationship between manager and players that was souring under Gullit.

Those who spent time at Chelsea's training ground at Harlington while Gullit was in charge sensed a feeling that the club might implode at any moment under the pressures of his management style. The mood is lighter and happier but even more professional now that Vialli is in charge.

Those facts notwithstanding, Gullit, who seems increasingly desperate in his straightened circumstances in the North East, chose the aftermath of Newcastle's defeat of Saturday to indulge in another bout of clumsy psychological warfare with Vialli.

Mining the same seam that he had explored on Friday, when he claimed that Vialli had merely copied his methods and used his rotation system, Gullit's bitterness betrayed itself again when he insisted that Chelsea "have to win" the title this season and that there will be "no hiding place" for Vialli if they do not.

TOP OF THE TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Chelsea	21	10	10	1	32	17	40
Aston Villa	21	11	7	3	31	20	40
Man Utd	21	10	8	3	43	24	38
Arsenal	21	9	9	3	22	11	36
Leeds	21	8	9	4	34	20	33
Wimbledon	21	9	6	6	29	33	33
Liverpool	21	9	5	7	36	25	32
West Ham	21	9	5	7	25	27	32
Middlesbro	21	7	10	4	32	26	31
Leicester	21	7	8	6	23	21	29

"If he is trying to be smart, we will not fall for that," Vialli said. "Everyone can say what they think, but it is wrong to say that a team *must* win the championship. This is a game. It is not a war or something like that. Everybody must do their best, but that is all they can do and I am very pleased with my players after the way they performed against Newcastle.

"We are doing our best. We are getting a few results now and it means that someone is going to have to do well to do better than us. But there is still no question that we *have* to win the title. We are just pleased because we are back at the top of the table. It is a great feeling to be up there.

"As far as I was concerned, this game was not about Ruud Gullit versus Gianluca Vialli, it was about Newcastle versus Chelsea. Football clubs are not just about one man. Ruud did a great job for Chelsea and when he left, I tried to continue where he left off, but I did things my way and brought in my own ideas. I will owe something to him if I succeed here, but that is obvious. If he wins the championship with Newcastle, he will owe something to Kevin Keegan and Kenny Dalglish, too.

"I inherited a very good team, but when that happens the pressure is sometimes greater because you have to produce. Sometimes when you take over a bad team, it is easier to do the job. There is more room for improvement."

In all Gullit's assertions about the Chelsea team being his creation, about how Vialli has only made two signings, it has been left unsaid how important those signings were. One of Gullit's great weaknesses was his apparent inability to identify Frank Sinclair as the team's Achilles' heel at right back. Lack of cover for Frank Leboeuf and Michael Duberry at centre back was also a flaw.

Vialli has fixed that with the signings of Albert Ferrer and Marcel Desailly, the World Cup's best defender, and the Chelsea defence, formerly a laughing stock, has conceded fewer league goals than any except Arsenal. In their new player-coach, they have found a man whose substance outweighs his considerable style, not the other way around.

United win, page 29
Football, pages 28-33



Management positions: Vialli acknowledges the Chelsea fans; Gullit broods. Main photograph: Jeff Mitchell

Sealed with a kiss: Petrescu celebrates scoring the winner by kissing Wise, but it was determined defence, as exemplified by Duberry, left, and Leboeuf, that made the difference

TENNIS

Schuttler rips up final script as Henman falters

FROM ALIX RAMSAY IN DOHA

IT HAD been scheduled as the perfect start to Tim Henman's year — reaching the final of the opening tournament of the season and facing a lowly-ranked qualifier from Germany. It could not get any better than that. Unfortunately, the script was not allowing for the style and quality of Rainer Schuttler, a 22-year-old hopeful from Bad Hamburg, who, over the course of two hours, dismantled the world No 7 to win his first ATP Tour final 6-4, 5-7, 6-1.

Not that Henman could complain about the result. If he started slowly, he more than made up for it as the match progressed and the battle of wits produced some startling rallies and some truly excellent winners, most of them coming from Schuttler. Pounding Henman from the baseline and hurting him time and again with his forehand, he left Henman with no margin for error. What would normally have been an outright winner was sent straight back, often beyond the Briton's flailing racket.

The second set brought the best from Henman as he manufactured seven break points, but still Schuttler would not lie down. He was so frustrated by missing the third that, in a rare show of temper, he smashed his racket to the court to earn a warning from the umpire for racket abuse. Eventually, after 1hr 40min of sweat and struggle, it was Schuttler who showed the merest hint of weakness, dropping his service and the set with a double fault.

Yet having given his all to level the match, Henman was caught at the start of the third set. Broken in the opening game, he was always struggling to get back on terms, while Schuttler was going from strength to strength. If the shot was not perfect, Schuttler punished it, keeping Henman at the back of the court and running him ragged. He broke again in the fifth game to take a 4-1 lead and, by the time that Henman was serving to stay in the match, there was nothing left in the tank.

Schuttler may be ranked more than 100 places below Henman, but the Great Britain No 1 had less than happy memories of their two meetings. Last year, when the wheels were starting to fall off his game, Henman opted to play an extra tournament in Split only to lose to the German in the first round. Just when he was looking for a little confidence booster, Schuttler served only to ease Henman on his way to a run of first-round defeats.

Given their previous encounters, Henman was not going to take his opponent lightly. Schuttler had battled his way through three rounds of qualifying before scything through the seeds in the main draw, disposing of Goran Ivanisevic and Cedric Pioline in consecutive matches.

Nevertheless, despite his defeat in the final, this has been an impressive week for Henman. He arrived here straight from his Christmas break and hit the ground running. His opponents have not been of the highest calibre, but they contrived to test all aspects of his game and, until the decider, he came up trumps on each occasion.

His serve-and-volley game was effective and, when forced to play from the back of the court, his groundstrokes served him well. When he had to fight, as he did against Jeff Tarango, he delivered the goods and when faced with a straightforward encounter — as against Sjeng Schalken and Karim Alami — he kept his concentration from start to finish.

Before his meeting with Schuttler, Henman said: "I don't think Sjeng played as well as he would have liked, but that performance was pretty consistent. Against Alami, once I got the first set under my belt, I just wanted to keep on. To come through some of the matches the way I have this week and to do it so early in the season gives me a lot of satisfaction."

Enqvist is a hurdle too far for Hewitt

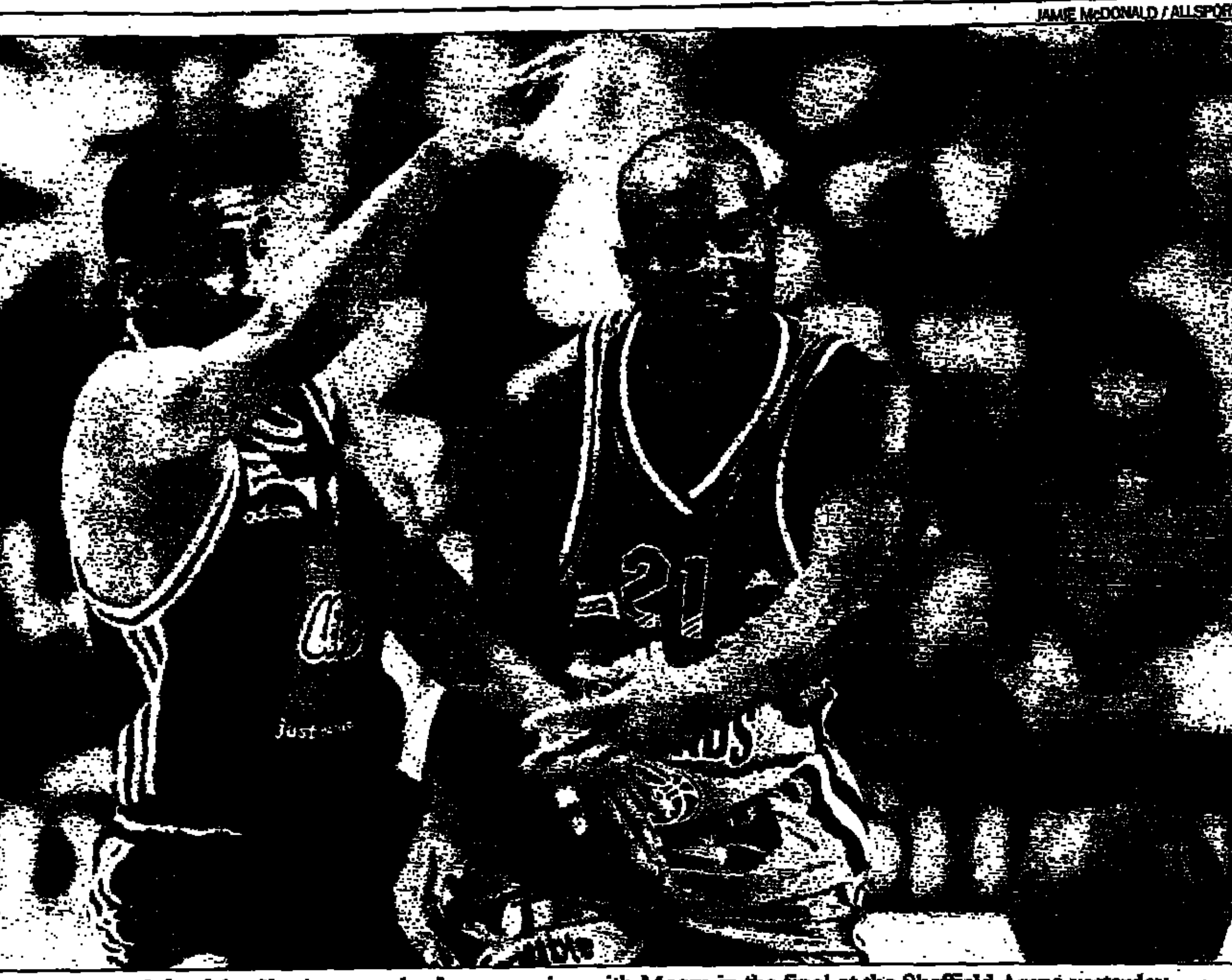
THOMAS ENQVIST, of Sweden, halted the unbeaten run of Lleyton Hewitt in the Australian men's hard court championship in Adelaide.

Enqvist, the No 2 seed, dropped the first set, but fought back to overrun the 17-year-old from Adelaide 4-6 6-1, 6-2 in his comeback after ankle surgery.

Conchita Martínez, of Spain, enjoyed a straight-sets victory over Rachel McQuillan, of Australia, in their first-round match at the Sydney International tournament, winning 6-0, 6-3.

Alicia Molik, the Australian teenager, beat Natasha Zvereva, the No 16 seed, of Belarus, 6-3, 6-4, to set up a second round meeting with Martina Hingis, the world No. 2.

Jelena Dokic, the 15-year-old world junior champion, helped Australia to win the Hopman Cup.



Renton, left, of the Sharks, grapples for possession with Moore in the final at the Sheffield Arena yesterday

Myers proves catalyst for victory

BY NICHOLAS HARLING

THE anger simmering within Sheffield Sharks turned first to relief and then to undisguised glee yesterday when they captured the Sainsbury's Classic Cola National Cup for the first time since 1995 with a gripping 67-65 victory over Greater London Leopards.

It mattered not to the Sharks or Chris Finch, their coach, that they had scrapped their way to victory in the Sheffield Arena, recording the lowest score by final winners. In Terrell Myers, who collected 29 points besides gathering seven rebounds, they had the obvious recipient of the most valuable player award.

Yet, like his team-mates, Myers had to fulfil a fixture that the Sharks could have done without on Friday, when they were taken to double overtime by Birmingham Bullets before gaining the victory that took them joint-top of the Budweiser League. Finch, who wanted the game postponed, argued with the hindsight of victory: "If players are tired going into a cup final, they shouldn't be playing."

Finch had been incensed, too, that the Leopards, overwhelmed by margins of 25 and 34 points in league fixtures between the teams this season, had been allowed, at short notice, to reinforce their squad with Rashod Johnson, a new American 6ft 1in guard. Johnson's 15 points helped the Leopards' cause, but Finch could have been excused later for gloating when the product of Western Michigan University missed the shot that cost the Leopards victory.

When Johnson's three-point attempt came off the rim 3sec from time, desperate hands clutched unavailingly for the rebound. The ball was still bouncing around when the buzzer rescued the Sharks. Appropriately, that meant that Myers was the match-winner. Taking a slick pass from Todd Cauthorn, 26sec earlier, Myers had driven for the basket to complete his haul. Most of his points had come from farther out. Two of his trio of three-pointers came during a 10-2 flurry just after the interval, enabling the Sharks to build on their 39-36 advantage and open a 55-44 gap.

With Johnson, Robert Youngblood and Eric Burks all on three fouls, the Leopards were in trouble, but, if there is one team that can never be discounted in adversity, it is Billy Mims's squad. "We were playing our style of game," Finch said. "Maybe it was a case of us relaxing when we were looking for the knockout punch."

Whatever it was, the Leopards stormed back to lead 64-61, having prevented the Sharks from scoring for six minutes, during which time their own Johnson — Wilbur — missed two free throws. Johnson's vulnerability on the line was the chief reason why the Sharks finished with only 17 points from their 28 free throws, yet, with his eight rebounds, only two less than Cauthorn for the Sharks, Wilbur Johnson more than made amends. "They murdered us on the rebounds," Mims said. It was a department in which he had expected to match the hosts.

However, Mims may have anticipated his side's recovery, he cannot have foreseen the manner in which it fell flat. The 1997 winners had made most of the early running, with Tim Moore and Youngblood the chief scorers, but, now in front again, they could not stay there.

Significantly, there was little help from their back court, where Eric Burks once again failed to live up to his reputation. He conceded the advantage not only to Myers, but also to Travis Conlan, whose quick hands brought him 16 points — but Myers was the catalyst. "I have the utmost confidence in him making things happen," Finch said. "He's a big-game player."

BOWLS

Sanders takes comfort indoors

BY DAVID RHYS JONES

GRIFF SANDERS may be the subject of a ten-year suspension from the game, but that could not stop him giving the England indoor selectors a fine display to ponder at the weekend in the international trials at Bournemouth.

Sanders, 26, of the Teignbridge club, wrote a cryptic message, maligning the county secretary, on a scorecard at the South West championships in August, resulting in the now well-chronicled punishment, but, while the ban, imposed in September, was implemented by the outdoor authorities, Sanders is free to play indoors and has been a key player in Devon's march to the semi-finals of the Liberty Trophy.

On Saturday, he played third man in John Wickham's South West rink, which defeated the quartet of Tony Allcock, 19-13, and he was again to the fore yesterday as Wickham's team dispatched Andy Thomson's rink, 20-8.

Mike Willis, the England president, said: "Griff's certainly got talent and, as far as we're concerned, his behaviour has been impeccable. We know he has problems with the outdoor authorities, but he seems to behave himself indoors."

The decision to turn the trials into a competitive occasion, with regional teams playing for the Peter Brimble Trophy, was welcomed by the players, as was the expansion of the event into a round-robin tournament. The rinks skipped by Allcock and David Ward both suffered three defeats, however, while Thomson lost twice. With England's dismal record in the past seven years, there may be wholesale changes.

Sanders could be among the newcomers, while members of the North team, who finished top of the league and took the trophy, will be hoping for a reward when the side is announced on Thursday.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Odds are against Lindsay

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

THE Super League clubs are due to meet the board of Super League Europe (SLE) today to discuss the position of Maurice Lindsay as managing director.

The clubs want to know how Lindsay, whose two-year contract ends after the forthcoming season, can continue to function in the job satisfactorily while expanding his horse racing interests. Last month, Lindsay paid more than £200,000 for racecourse betting pitches at Cheltenham, York, Doncaster and Haydock.

The pitches equate to more than 100 meetings a year and while theoretically Lindsay could be represented in his absence, there is concern over his six-figure salary at SLE being paid by the Rugby Football League (RFL), his former employers, until October, when the clubs themselves must meet the cost of Lindsay or a successor.

His first season at SLE brought a renegotiated five-year television contract up to 2003, new sponsors, in the form of JJB Sports, and a successful first Super League Grand Final.

Wendell Sailor, the Brisbane Broncos and Australia wing, who is playing rugby union as an amateur for Leeds Tykes, will have to pay damages to Wigan Warriors after a High Court judgment. Wigan maintained that Sailor had agreed a £500,000 two-year contract with them, starting this year.

The world darts championship is unique, Mel Webb discovers

Carrying out a serious business in smoke-filled rooms

It is a little after noon as they wander about distractedly, blinking. Mole-like, they seem disorientated by the sunlight, for they are creatures of the night. They are about as happy at this time of day as a thousand Count Draculas, but powerless to resist the spectacle of stakes being metaphorically driven through the hearts of their anti-heroes by the men they idolise. The denizens of darts are abroad.

Saturday was semi-final day in the Embassy world darts championship and, just as in any other knockout competitions, it was a day of agony and ecstasy. To be beaten in the first round is one thing; to get within touching distance of the big one, only to be sent packing, quite another. Semi-finals are wonderful, awful, bloody and beautiful and these were no different. Somehow, the whole thing was made exponentially worse by the fact that darts at this hour just did not feel right: like eating tiramisu for breakfast.

Football has its Wembley, cricket its Lord's, golf its St Andrews. Darts has the Lakeside Club in a village called Frimley Green that is nominally in Surrey but is actually nowhere in particular. For a large majority of the year, Frimley Green prefers to remain anonymous, but for eight days every January it becomes a place that demands to be visited at least once in the lifetime of a darts fan: see Frimley Green and die . . .

Each session of these championships has been filled by 1,200 roaring, arm-waving, celebrating, weeping dartophiles, who, having read the small print in their road maps and actually found the place, have died a thousand deaths at the bloodless warfare taking place up there on the oche. Saturday was no different.

The Lakeside Club spends much of its life as a cavernous night-spot that, in its time, has played host to such purveyors of popular culture as Roy "Chubby" Brown and Bernard Manning, but for this event it is transformed into the mother of all smoke-filled rooms, a temple of rampant alcoholic consumerism whose ritual libation is cool, chemical, amber-coloured and fizzy and comes in a straight glass or six. The supplicants' robes are an obeisance to St Polyester, the patron saint of shiny man-made fibre, and their gods are made more godlike for their very similarity to those who worship them.

There are those who say that darts is not sport, but if one definition of sport is the pitting of one man against another, head-to-head, in a contest involving hand, eye and the ability to project a missile better than the other guy, an exercise in skill and tactics and concentration with a winner and a loser, then darts is sport. If sport is that which can reduce strong men to tears in defeat, then darts is sport. If archery is sport, so is darts.

It is a small irony that the plasma from which darts draws its lifeblood is the very thing that its critics use to denigrate it. Without the public house and the social club, two of the staples of British life, darts would not exist, but the booze-and-fags culture that is inextricably woven into the warp and weft of the game is at once its greatest strength and its most potentially damaging weakness.

So much so that, in 1989, the British Darts Organisation, the organisers of the Embassy event, banned its players from either smoking or drinking publicly when in world championship action. Thus, when the four semi-finalists walked on stage on Saturday, there was not a glass nor yet a cigarette-end in sight. Except in the audience, where there was alcohol and nicotine overkill. The matches themselves were anti-climactic, not that anybody could have guessed from the mayhem going on in the auditorium as the fumes from a thousand cigarettes and as many pints permeated the air.

Ray Barneveld, the Dutchman defending the title that he won last year, trampled all over Chris Mason, an intense young West Countryman, who, after being beaten 5-2, was a rhapsody of tear-stained misery. "I have a dream, you see," he said. "I'm not crying because I lost, but because I have nothing left in my body to give. But I'm a fighter and a warrior and I'll keep coming back until I achieve my dream." Cripes.

As quotes go, it was pretty potent stuff, but Barneveld, who stopped being a postman after a ticker-tape reception back home in The Hague as a result of his victory last year, was no slouch with the imagery himself. "There was an angel on my shoulder today," he said. It was a wonder it did not fall off, what with all that clenched-fist stuff at the end, but it demonstrated, if nothing else, angels' powers of adhesion, especially on shoulders.

The other semi-final pitted Ronnie Baxter, a fast-shooting Lancastrian clad in an ersatz red football shirt, against Andy Fordham, a gentle, long-haired mountain of a man playing in his third semi-final in five years. Fordham, a publican from Woolwich, won the first leg of the first set, then lost the next 11 legs before he won another. When he did stir himself, it was too late and Baxter, the quiet man, was on the cusp of a 5-1 victory.

And then suddenly, with the last muted "thunk" of dart into board, it was all over. The lights on the oche dimmed, the people filed out. Back to the real world. Back, blessedly, to the darkness outside. Frimley Green was, again, No-Place, England. The theatre of dreams was restored to anonymity. It was, in a strange sort of way, reassuring.

WARREN LITTLE/ALLSPORT



Barneveld in action during his semi-final win over Mason

Simon Barnes, page 35

SPORT IN BRIEF

Rolph lands golden haul in Hong Kong

■ SWIMMING: Susan Rolph, of Great Britain, has three gold medals after the second day of competition in the FINA World Cup short-course championships, the same number as Kelly Stefanyshyn, of Canada, and Sophia Skou, of Denmark. Rolph won the 100 metres freestyle in 55.52sec, before adding the 100 metres individual medley in 1min 2.58sec. She shared the gold in the 50 metres freestyle with Skou when they finished in a dead-heat on Saturday. Stefanyshyn took the 100 metres backstroke in 1min 0.75sec yesterday, a day after she won the 50 metres backstroke and the 200 metres backstroke. Michael Cole, of Britain, finished third in the men's 400 metres individual medley on Saturday in a time of 4min 25.31sec. The race was won by Tom Dolan, of the United States, in a time of 4min 19.96sec, ahead of Fong Lik-Sun, of Hong Kong.

Knight claims first title

■ CYCLING: Steve Knight won his first national senior cyclo-cross championship yesterday in the 22-kilometre race at Sutton Park, Birmingham, to bring his medal haul to three in as many years (Peter Bryan writes). He took bronze last year and silver in 1997. Knight, 32, never gave up the chase for victory from his two main rivals, Nick Craig, the defending champion, and Barrie Clarke, the winner two years ago, even though, with five kilometres left, it appeared that Craig would retain the title. Knight's persistence was rewarded when he went clear in the uphill final kilometre to win by 14sec.

Limo makes fast start

■ ATHLETICS: Richard Limo, of Kenya, the runner-up in the world junior cross-country championships in 1998, won the first of this year's International Amateur Athletic Federation world cross-country permit meetings at Amorebieta in Spain yesterday. Limo completed the undulating 10.8-kilometre course in 33min 53sec. Gete Wami, of Ethiopa, the 1996 world champion, was a clear winner of the women's 6.3-kilometre race in 23min 19sec.

Hall triumphs again

■ BADMINTON: Darren Hall secured a record fourth Grand Slam men's singles title in one season when he beat Colin Haughton, of Manchester, 15-11, 15-3, in the Friends Provident Grand Slam series in Portsmouth. In the women's singles, Kelly Morgan overwhelmed Julia Mann, the England No 1, in 31 minutes. Jo Goode and Donna Kellogg took the women's doubles, while the men's doubles was won by Nathan Robertson and Julian Robertson.

Fu continues to climb

■ SNOOKER: Marco Fu overcame an old rival to start his year on a winning note in the Regal Scottish Open at Blackpool yesterday. The 21-year-old from Hong Kong beat Stuart Bingham, of Basildon, 5-3 to reach the final qualifying round of the tournament and record his 21st victory in 26 world-ranking event matches so far this season. Fu has climbed 331 places to No 46 in the world rankings this season.

Schlesser in command

■ MOTOR RALLYING: Jean-Louis Schlesser, of France, won the ninth stage of the Dakar Rally yesterday to open a big lead over his nearest rival, Miguel Prieto, of Spain. Schlesser, in a car he designed himself, won the 300-kilometre timed section of the stage by 7min from Kenjiro Shinozuka, of Japan. Prieto, only 2min 10sec behind Schlesser at the start, found himself 9min 25sec adrift after finishing third.

ICE HOCKEY: MANCHESTER GO SIX POINTS CLEAR AT TOP OF SUPERLEAGUE

Storm take overtime initiative

BY NORMAN DE MESQUITA

MANCHESTER Storm completed a productive weekend yesterday, beating Sheffield Steelers 5-2 at the NEM Arena after their 3-2 win over Ayr Scottish Eagles on Friday. It took overtime for the Storm to earn their two points against Ayr, even though Brad Rubachuk and Jeff Tomlinson had given them a 2-0 lead in the first eight minutes.

However, Ayr showed great resilience, with Shawn Byram scoring twice to take the game into overtime. Frank Pietrangelo, in the Storm goal, showed his worth by making a brilliant save to deny Kevin Hoffman early in the extra session, before Stefan Ketola scored the winning goal with six minutes remaining.

Manchester's victory yesterday was a little more straightforward. Kelly Askew gave them the lead after only 81sec, when he slipped the puck under Grant Sjervn in the Sheffield goal.

Teeder Wynne levelled matters before the first interval, but Dave Morrison scored the only goal of the second period to restore the Manchester lead and goals by Rob Robinson — his first of the season — and Jeff Jablonski in the space of 47sec put the game beyond Sheffield. Jason Heywood did pull one back for the Steelers, but Jablonski scored his second and Manchester's fifth in the dying moments to take the Storm six points clear of Cardiff Devils at the top of the Sekonda Superleague.

In the only Superleague fixture on Saturday, Nottingham Panthers had a convincing 8-3 win over London Knights. Paul Adey scored the only goal of the first period for the Panthers, but, within five minutes of the restart, Mike Harding had brought London level. The Panthers then took the game over, with goals from Adey, Graham Garden and two goals from Jason Weaver putting them 5-1 ahead.

The Panthers continued to dominate in the third period, with both Adey and Weaver taking their evening's tally to three goals as London once again showed themselves to be not quite good enough for this league.

FOOTBALL

Arsenal put 11 past Chelsea

ARSENAL, the Axa FA Women's Cup-holders, cruised through to the fifth round of this season's competition with an emphatic 11-0 win against Chelsea at Beaconsfield. Justine Lorton and Marieanne Spacey scored hat-tricks while Rachel Yankey and Kelly Few each added two goals.

Karen Walker, the England striker, scored four times as Doncaster Belles beat Canary Racers 6-0. Three of Walker's goals were headers.

After going behind to an early goal by Stacey Daniel, Southampton Saints recovered to beat Leeds City Vixens 2-1. Anna Dimsdale equalised for the Premier League side before Lisa Langrish scored the decisive goal.

CRICKET

Mullally's best paves way for winning start

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN BRISBANE

BRISBANE (England won toss): England beat Australia by eight runs (D/l method)

AFTER a bracing end to the Test series, which brought England victory in Melbourne and an honourable defeat in Sydney, this rain-affected match was thin stuff and England won it after drizzle had taken a 16-over bite out of the Australia innings.

With nine games left before the best-of-three final, England will be taking nothing for granted and nor should they. A record of nine losses out of the past 12 one-day matches suggests that they might not win many more. There were international debuts for Mark Alleyne, the Gloucestershire captain, and Vince Wells, of Leicestershire. They made a dozen runs between them, nothing spectacular, but Alleyne did contribute a run-out.

The man who will remember this day most vividly is Alan Mullally, who was distinctly peeved to be excluded from the last Test. He was not in the original party of 37 nominated for the World Cup, but he will probably be in the list when it is whittled down to 15 by the end of next month. He was the man of the match here for taking four for 18, the best one-day return by an English bowler in Australia.

They were four good wickets, too, so that when Julian joined Bevan, Australia were 48 for five. They did well in the end to get so close and it was all down to Bevan, who excels in this form of the game. He required ten runs from the last three balls of the innings, but Gough proved to be too canny.

The next six months are crucial for England if they are to maintain, or better still, lift the profile of the game. The opening World Cup match, against Sri Lanka, their opponents today, *is at Lord's on May 14*, yet they have no idea what their best side is. Alec Stewart is the captain; that much is known. Otherwise, it is all a bit of a mish-mash. The all-rounder policy, favoured when England won a competition on the slow pitches of Sharjah 13 months ago, has apparently been discarded. Dougie Brown and Matthew Fleming are not here and neither is Ally Brown, the big-hitting Surrey opener.



Warne: run out by Alleyne

Instead, Alleyne and Wells have been chosen and the over-30 club is also represented by the captain, Hick and *Fairbrother*. There aren't many gazelles in that lot, nor is it absolutely clear to what Wells owes his promotion, other than being a late developer who can bat a bit and bowl, if asked. He played a horrid stroke yesterday, charging Dale and playing grotesquely across the line. Although anybody can get out to a poor shot in one-day cricket, this was ghastly.

England's preparation is confused by the conflicting demands of one-day cricket here, in Sharjah, which they revisit in March, and in their own country. Pitches at Worcester and Northampton in May bear little resemblance to what they can expect to play on before then. That is true for the others as well, but, on the whole, those countries know what their best side looks like. England are still trying to find theirs.

Fairbrother, who played in a one-day final for Lancashire 15 years ago, must be in with a shout. He was a World Cup finalist in Melbourne in 1992, when he sought to keep England afloat against Pakistan, and, although he is here in Thorpe's stead, he remains an outstanding one-day player, capable of advancing the score by stealth.

England owed him a lot after Dale, McGrath and Fleming took early wickets. Stewart, Wells and Hick all perished before Warne brought himself on, though *Hick was unlucky to be given out caught off the pad*. Unlucky or not, he would do well to make some runs before long. He is an automatic choice in the one-day team and for two years has done little to justify his inclusion.

Knight, opening the face of his bat, was caught behind. Hollioake, tucked up by Fleming, edged another catch to Gilchrist. Alleyne, looking for a second run to fine leg after he paddled Warne round the corner, failed to beat McGrath's throw. Ealham, the ball after driving Julian straight for six, spooned a dolly to extra cover.

Through all this mess, Fairbrother played sensibly, running the singles, taking hits where he could, knowing all the time that games like this can surprise one. He's not a fool. By the time that McGrath hit his off stump with a fine yorker nine overs from the end, he had gathered 47 decent runs. They were to prove vital, but no more vital than the 42 that Croft and Gough shared in an unbroken ninth-wicket stand.

Would it be enough? The way that Australia set off when the drizzle relented, Waugh and Gilchrist taking *32 from Gough's first three* overs, suggested that no, it would not be. Then Mullally struck, and struck again, and found the striking to his liking. Waugh and Gilchrist and Ponting gone. Then Blewett, cutting Ealham, and Martyn for ducks. Suddenly, Australia had given the game away.

They would have given it up altogether if Bevan had been dismissed for 12, as he should have been. Stewart ignored a catch — a straightforward one at that — when the batsman nicked one from Hollioake into his pads, preferring to go up for a leg-before shout. *Bevan rode his luck and passed* 3,000 runs in one-day internationals, at the convincing average of 58.

Warne, chancing a run to mid-on, fell to Alleyne's left-handed swoop and right-handed throw. There were 27 needed from three overs: Fleming belted a catch to *long-off*, where Mullally, sliding in, eyes half-closed, was the eccentric catcher. Thirteen from the last over: Gough yorked Dale, then made sure his former Yorkshire team-mate would not be the victor. Bevan finished 56 not out from 76 balls and hit only two of them to the *pickets, so England emerged* with some credit. They bowled tidily with a wet ball and fielded reasonably. But they should not let this go to their heads.

☐ The three-nation series has each country playing ten matches, meeting the other two on five separate occasions between yesterday and February 7. Two points are awarded for a win and the top two teams progress to the three-match finals round between February 10 and 14.



Mullally, the man of the match, salutes the fall of Gilchrist, the first of four wickets for the Leicestershire bowler

STU FORSTER / ALLSPORT

SCOREBOARD FROM BRISBANE

England won toss

ENGLAND

N V Knight c Gilchrist b McGrath (57 balls, 3 fours)	30
*† A J Stewart lbw b Dale (1 ball)	0
V J Wells b Dale (22 balls, 1 four)	10
G A Hick c Gilchrist b Fleming (14 balls, 1 four)	8
N H Fairbrother b McGrath (83 balls, 4 fours)	47
A J Hollioake c Gilchrist b Fleming (20 balls)	5
M W Alleyne run out (McGrath/Gilchrist) (3 balls)	2
M A Ealham c Ponting b Julian (31 balls, 1 six)	14
R D B Croft not out (46 balls, 1 four)	26
D Gough not out (24 balls, 2 fours)	23
Extras (lb 4, w 8, nb 1)	13
Total (8 wkts, 50 overs, 209min)	178

A D Mullally did not bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-0 (Knight 0), 2-29 (Knight 17), 3-42 (Knight 22), 4-72 (Fairbrother 17), 5-87 (Fairbrother 26), 6-93 (Fairbrother 30), 7-122 (Fairbrother 44), 8-136 (Croft 10).

BOWLING: McGrath 10-1-24-2 (2 fours; 4-1-12-0, 2-0-2-1, 4-0-10-1); Dale 10-3-25-2 (w 2; 3 fours; one spell); Fleming 10-0-33-2 (w 1; 1 four; 4-0-11-1, 4-0-15-1, 2-0-7-0); Julian 5-0-29-1 (nb 1, w 2; 1 six, 2 fours; 3-0-17-0, 2-0-12-1); Warne 10-0-42-0 (w 2; 3 fours; 7-0-22-0, 3-0-20-0); Blewett 5-0-21-0 (w 1; 1 four; one spell).

Score after 15 overs: 45 for 3.

AUSTRALIA

M E Waugh c Stewart b Mullally (22 balls, 4 fours)	23
† A C Gilchrist b Mullally (11 balls, 2 fours)	13
R T Ponting c Hollioake b Mullally (18 balls)	8
D R Martyn b Mullally (8 balls)	0
G S Blewett c Stewart b Ealham (10 balls)	0
M G Bevan not out (76 balls, 2 fours)	56
B P Julian b Croft (43 balls, 1 four)	23
*S K Warne run out (Alleyne) (16 balls)	8
D W Fleming c Mullally b Croft (7 balls)	2
A C Dale b Gough (4 balls)	4
G D McGrath not out (1 ball)	1
Extras (lb 2, w 5)	7
Total (9 wkts, 36 overs, 171min)	145

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-24 (M E Waugh 9), 2-46 (Ponting 7), 3-47 (Martyn 0), 4-48 (Martyn 0), 5-48 (Bevan 0), 6-94 (Bevan 20), 7-117 (Bevan 35), 8-129 (Bevan 45), 9-142 (Bevan 54).

BOWLING: Gough 8-0-47-1 (w 3, 6 fours; 3-0-32-0, 2-0-10-0, 1-0-5-1); Mullally 8-1-18-4 (1 four; one spell); Ealham 7-1-16-1 (5-1-9-1, 2-0-7-0); Hollioake 7-1-31-0 (w 1; 1 four; 5-1-18-0, 2-0-13-0); Croft 7-0-24-2 (w 1; one spell); Alleyne 1-0-7-0 (1 four).

☐ Start of Australia's innings delayed 100 minutes by rain. Innings reduced to 36 overs and target revised to 153. Fielding restrictions imposed for first 10 overs.

Score after 10 overs: 48 for 3.

England won by 8 runs

Match award: A D Mullally.

Umpires: D J Harper and A J McQuillan. Third umpire: P D Parker.
Referee: P L van der Merwe (South Africa).

ENGLAND MATCHES TO COME: 11 Jan: v Sri Lanka (Brisbane); 15 Jan: v Australia (Melbourne); 17 Jan: v Australia (Sydney); 19 Jan: v Sri Lanka (Melbourne); 23 Jan: v Sri Lanka (Adelaide); 26 Jan: v Australia (Adelaide); 29 Jan: v Sri Lanka (Perth); 3 Feb: v Sri Lanka (Sydney); 5 Feb: v Australia (Sydney). 10 Feb: First Final (Sydney); 12 Feb: Second Final (Melbourne); 14 Feb: Third Final (Melbourne).

☐ Compiled by Bill Frindall

Tests come first for England in South Africa tour

BY IVO TENNANT

ENGLAND'S hectic international schedule continues next winter with a tour to South Africa that will be two weeks longer than when they were last there, under the captaincy of Mike Atherton, in 1995-96. It includes five Test matches, culminates in a triangular tournament and continues with three one-day matches in Harare, Zimbabwe.

The Tests commence in Johannesburg. The third in the series will start on Boxing Day in Durban and the fourth will be held in Cape Town, to coincide with the new year holidays and the start of the millennium. Newlands, which has been transformed into a stadium, will have an additional stand erected by then.

One of the reasons for this is because Dr Ali Bacher, the managing director of the United Cricket Board of South Africa, anticipates that the visit of England will attract record crowds for a series in the Republic. "If the weather is fine, we anticipate a total attendance of around 350,000," he said. This would be considerably more than for the present series against West Indies, who have brought few supporters with them, and when England were last in the country, which coincided with an unusually wet summer.

There will not be a fixture in Soweto on this occasion, but two matches will be staged in Lenasia and Alice, which are termed "disadvantaged areas".

Above all, the tour will determine whether South Africa's side is chosen on merit, as their selectors would wish, or if the pressure from the Government is such that "players of colour" will have to be included even if they are not up to Test class. England will again take separate squads for the Test Matches and the one-day internationals.

ITINERARY: October 27: arrive Johannesburg. November 1: Randjesfontein: v NFO XI. 2: Benoni: v Easterns. 5-8: Cape Town: v Combined Western Province/Boland XI. 12-15: Bloemfontein: v Combined Free State/Griqualand West. 18-21: Centurion: v Combined Northerns/Gauteng XI. 25-29: First Test, Johannesburg: v South Africa. December 1: Lenasia: v Gauteng Invitation XI. 3-6: Durban: v KwaZulu-Natal. 9-13: Second Test, Port Elizabeth: v South Africa. 16: Alice: v Combined Eastern Province/Border Invitation XI. 18-21: East London: v Combined Eastern Province/Border XI. 26-30: Third Test, Durban: v South Africa. January 2000, 2-6: Fourth Test, Cape Town: v South Africa. 9-11: Port Elizabeth: v South Africa Invitation XI. 14-18: Fifth Test, Centurion: v South Africa. 20: Potchefstroom: v North West. 23: One-day international, Bloemfontein: v South Africa. 26: One-day international, Cape Town: v South Africa. 28: One-day international, Paarl: v Zimbabwe. 30: One-day international, Kimberley: v Zimbabwe. February 3: One-day international, Centurion: v Zimbabwe. 5: One-day international, East London: v South Africa. 9: One-day international final, Johannesburg. February 11: England team arrives Bulawayo. 12: Bulawayo: v District XI. 13: First one-day international, Bulawayo: v Zimbabwe. 16: Second one-day international, Harare: v Zimbabwe. 19: Third one-day international, Harare: v Zimbabwe. 20: Fourth one-day international, Harare: v Zimbabwe

Dravid's century in vain

TAUPO (India won toss): New Zealand beat India by five wickets

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

NEW ZEALAND beat India by five wickets in the opening day-night cricket international at Owen Delany Park here on Saturday after a floodlight failure left the home side chasing a reduced victory target.

In reply to India's 257, New Zealand were 168 for three off 30.4 overs when the floodlights went out, causing a 50-minute delay. New Zealand's *target was recalculated* to an additional 33 runs off 8.2 overs and those runs were knocked off with an over to spare leaving the home team at 200 for five.

Mohammad Azharuddin, the India captain, said that it was frustrating to come out on the wrong side of a re-calculation, but players had to learn to cope with the disappointment. "They are the conditions for the World Cup, so we have to get used to them," Azharuddin said. "I have no major complaints. It was unfortunate that it happened at a crucial time."

The match was evenly poised, with India having just dismissed Craig McMillan for 73, when the stadium was plunged into darkness. On the third ball after the restart, Chris Cairns was caught at long-off, but Adam Parore and Chris Harris steered New Zealand to within six runs of the target. After Harris was run out for 13, Dion Nash joined Parore to score the winning runs. The New Zealand innings included a 105-run partnership between McMillan and Matthew Horne.

Earlier, *Rahul Dravid had* scored his third century against New Zealand in six days. After scores of 190 and 103 not out in the second Test, Dravid scored 123 not out, his hundred coming in 112 balls and including eight fours.

New Zealand were handicapped in the field by the loss of Stephen Fleming, their captain, to a groin injury. He is in doubt for the remaining four matches in the series.

Scoreboard, page 39

ICC delays decision on match-fixing

THE International Cricket Council (ICC) said yesterday that it will not make any decisions until today on how it plans to tackle the problem of match-fixing in the sport. After its meeting in Christchurch, the ICC declined to comment on its initial discussions, although the Australian and Pakistan cricket boards used the opportunity to present a unified front.

Denis Rogers, the Australian Cricket Board (ACB) chairman, told a news conference that Australia had resolved its differences with Pakistan, although it had no intention of apologising for its handling of the affair. "We accept each other's views and the matter's been resolved," Rogers said. "Neither had to apologise to each other. That's what friendships are about. We are not bitter enemies. We have established a very close friendship. There is no bitterness."

Khalid Mahmood, the president of the Pakistan Cricket Board, agreed. "There has been a lack of communication in regards to specific problems, but we are completely satisfied with the explanations we have got from each other and we have accepted each other's point of view," he said.

SKIING: AUSTRIAN UPSTAGES HIS HERO BY BEATING THE LOCAL FAVOURITE IN WORLD CUP

Raich rattles off second surprise success

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF



Raich: second World Cup win

BENJAMIN RAICH, of Austria, upstaged Hermann Maier, his team-mate and idol, *in front of his home-town fans* to win the World Cup men's giant slalom race in Flachau, Austria, yesterday. It was his second victory in four days.

Raich, who won his first World Cup event at Schladming on Thursday, finished 0.65sec ahead of Michael von Grunigen, of Switzerland, in a time of 2min 27.02sec. Maier, the overall World Cup leader, finished in third place, 0.41sec behind Raich.

His surprise triumph in Schladming came after he was 23rd after the first run and yesterday Raich again produced a superb second run after being third at the conclusion of the first leg. He overhauled both Von Grunigen and Hans Knauss, of Austria, who slipped to fifth position, to achieve his success.

"I wasn't aiming to beat Hermann Maier in his home town," Raich, who is 20, said. "I just want to win every *time I ski. When I train, I try to study* everything that Maier does, so it is great to beat him."

Poor conditions forced organizers to call off the women's World Cup giant slalom race, which had been scheduled for Saturday. The Bavarian resort of Berchtesgaden was hit on Friday night with a fresh layer of snow, making it impossible to stage the race.

World Cup results 39

With the snowboarding world championships due to begin on the Goetschen piste today, the organisers felt that there was not enough time to hold the race and prepare for the next event. A decision will be made today whether to reschedule the race at another location.

Alexandra Meissnitzer, of Austria, holds a commanding lead in the overall World Cup standings. Meissnitzer, who has 980 *points*, leads Martina Ertl, of Germany, by 312 points and Hilde Gerg, also of Germany, by 360 points.

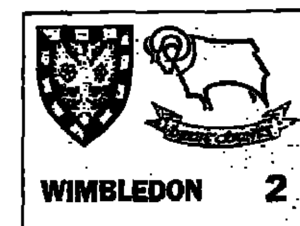
The women head to Austria where they will stage a downhill race, a super-giant slalom and a slalom.

Kazuyoshi Funaki, Japan's Olympic champion, landed the two best jumps of the day yesterday to claim his first World Cup ski jumping victory of the season in Engelberg, Switzerland.

Funaki, the gold medal-winner on the 120-metre hill in Nagano and the defending World Cup champion, soared 129.5 metres on his opening effort. He then improved slightly on his second jump, sailing 130 metres to finish with a winning score of 273.1 points.

Andreas Widhoelzl, of Austria, who was the Olympic bronze medal-winner on the small hill, was second with 262.8 points, followed by Noriaki Kasai, of Japan, in third position with 251.1 points.

Winning spirit is food for County's thoughts



WIMBLEDON 2

DERBY COUNTY 1

by Peter Robinson

IT WAS, perhaps, the most bizarre thing seen on a television screen in recent times, the sight of a Spanish woman undergoing surgery without the need of anaesthetic. It was gruesome, yes, probably pointless, too, since most sane people would much prefer to sleep through the whole ordeal, but most of all it was impressive. Anything, it seems, is possible if you want it, or want to do it, badly enough.

Ascetic Indian men can lie on beds of nails or walk over burning coals without incurring physical injury. Smokers can give up the evil weed. Men and women, young and old, fat and thin, able-bodied or not, can complete marathons, triathlons and worse. Vinnie Jones can, and indeed did, dream of and enjoy a career at the highest level of football, even winning international caps. Anything, absolutely anything, is possible.

That last example is apposite, of course. Jones embodied the spirit of Wimbledon Football Club better than anyone — the rough edges, the rebelliousness, the refusal to be intimidated by anybody or any situation — and, although he has long since left, to pursue an even more improbable career in films, the spirit remains.

Willpower won this match on Saturday, not skill, not luck, not tactics, not fitness. Derby County were superior in almost every way, every position, they dominated from start to finish — but they never looked like winning.

Every time the ball ran loose, a Wimbledon player sprinted at it, oblivious to the whereabouts of friend or foe alike; every time a Derby striker bore down on goal — which happened rather a lot — a blue shirt materialised in front of him, blocked his path and then seemed to vanish again. There was no masterplan, no strategic design, just clearance after tackle after header after save. No wonder Derby looked a bit bemused as they walked off at the end.

They were a goal down after just seven minutes, punished for some rotten defending. Roberts tried to find Euell in-

side the penalty area, but scuffed his chip; never mind, a weak clearance gave him the chance to try again, so he rolled his pass in the same direction, where Euell was still waiting, and he tucked his shot into the corner. Defenders stood and watched, which was nice of them, if negligent.

Roused, Derby poured forward in search of an equaliser, only to be denied by every type of last-gasp intervention that you can imagine. They had to wait for the 75th minute for their equaliser, which came when Wanchope finally escaped his marker for a moment to head in a deep free kick by Dorigo.

Visibly irritated, Wimbledon quickly scored again, Roberts driving home from ten yards after being set up by Ekoku and Leaburn, and the pattern resumed. Perry could have been sent off for bringing down Burton as the substitute threatened to break away, but the Derby protests were pretty half-hearted and he was merely booked, a fair decision (the collision looked unintentional), if not quite the right one.

Still, everything went Wimbledon's way on Saturday, even if they were forced to field a weakened team owing to injuries and what have you. It promises to be even worse away to Tottenham Hotspur next week, with Ekoku and Gayle on international duty, Cort and Euell suspended, to name but four certain non-starters, but that kind of adversity appears only to make them try even harder. They thrive on it. It is simply a matter of willpower.

WIMBLEDON (4-4-2) N Sullivan — B Thatcher, C Perry, D Blackwell, A Kimble — C Hughes (sub: E Ekoku, 79min), A Roberts, J Euell, M Hughes (sub: M Kennedy, 87) — M Gayle, C Cort (sub: C Leaburn, 72)

DERBY COUNTY (3-5-2) M Poom — S Prior, H Carbonari, S Elliott (sub: K Harper, 85) — J Laursen, L Carsley, S Eranio (sub: L Bohinen, 66), D Powell (sub: D Burton, 85), A Dorigo — P Wanchope, D Sturridge

Referee: A Wilkie

FA Carling Premiership: Eagerly anticipated Highbury soufflé fails to rise



Fowler, Liverpool's England forward, has an unusual view of the world after taking a heavy tumble at Highbury, where his indifferent form must have disturbed the watching Glenn Hoddle

Liverpool display new defensive resilience

ARSENAL 0

LIVERPOOL 0

by Matt Dickinson

THESE are confusing times indeed for those of a red persuasion on Merseyside after a performance that was as heartening as it was deflating, as full of defensive vigour as it was devoid of attacking adventure. They could not have known whether to sing or grumble on their way back to Liverpool?

Gérard Houllier, their beaming manager, looked ready to start a party, however, and maybe he was right. He had opted to smother Highbury with a thick defensive blanket and it worked so well that Anelka and Boa Morte must still be searching for a way out. Liverpool, unbeaten in five games, are edging back into European Cup equation. Yet things have come to a pretty pass when, given the opportunity to launch a late counter-attack, Patrik Berger opted instead to dispatch the ball towards the furthest corner flag. It was an act of negativity that brought a snort of derision from Patrick Vieira and Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal manager, could not resist a playful jibe to Houllier that, given his nine-man defence, he must be Italian rather than French.

Houllier has some way to go before he produces a back line that is of Serie A assuredness and the fact that Liverpool had to defend in such numbers would suggest that the men charged with the task still need reinforcements.

That there has been drastic improvement under Houllier is not open to debate, though. Reinventing himself as a Gallic George Graham since the ending of his doomed partnership with Roy Evans, the Frenchman has proved to be a firm wielder of the whip at the training ground, from which mobile phones have been banned and communication, certainly among the defenders, appears to have benefited. There is a resilience and a tactical organisation that was so hopelessly absent under the previous regime.

"We are cutting off the Spice Boys reputation," Houllier said, bursting with pride. "This performance would not have been possible two months ago, even one month, but they have proved that we have mental toughness and a more professional approach to defending. Why? Because it is their lives. We had strength and solidity when we lost the ball and that is what we have been trying to get for two months. No team can do well when they are shaky and have schoolboy mistakes."

Houllier will know that not losing, especially against a blunt Arsenal team badly lacking the invention of Dennis Bergkamp, is only the start. They have to balance that, particularly at home, with dominating matches and, to do that, he needs to address the problem that is Robbie Fowler.

The England striker's goalscoring record merits better treatment than playing the shire horse to Michael Owen's racing thoroughbred, but, with the boy wonder so much the focus for Liverpool's attacks, Fowler seems to be condemned to act as the labouring sidekick. It is clearly affecting his form and Fowler's lack of confidence must have been noticed by the watching Glenn Hoddle. Then again, if the England coach's main reason for attending was to gauge how his England team might perform against France next month, he may be having second thoughts about playing the match at all.

When two of England's leading midfield players can be made to look so pedestrian, there are reasons for everybody to be alarmed, but that was exactly what happened to Ince and Redknapp. Emmanuel Petit, in particular, was masterful and he will be relishing the chance to strut around Wembley with Ince in his wake. Patrick Vieira took slightly longer to warm up, but then he cannot even make the France line-up at present.

Even with Berger thrown in, Liverpool's midfield three provided no contest for the Arsenal pair, whose efficiency, both with and without the ball, is peerless. As long as they remain fit and disciplined, their team will remain championship contenders. They even managed to shrug off the provocation of Ince's elbow catching Petit in the face after 48 minutes.

Arsenal's problem — to no one's surprise — was penetration, with Anelka and Overmars both short of full form and fitness. "We needed that first goal to change the match," Wenger said. "Liverpool came to defend, but we have to show the strength to overcome that."

Instead, all that Gallic influence produced a suet pudding of a match — and it was very much to Houllier's taste.

ARSENAL (4-4-2) A Manninger — L Dixon, M Keown, S Bould (sub: M Upson, 32min), D Grondin — R Parlour, P Vieira, E Petit, M Overmars (sub: [illegible] Garde, 84) — N Anelka (sub: C Wreh, 87), L [illegible] Morte.

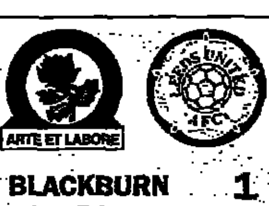
LIVERPOOL (3-5-2) D James — J Carragher, S Staunton (sub: D Matteo, 62), P Babb — V Heggem, J Redknapp, P Ince, P Berger, S Harkness — R Fowler, M Owen (sub: K Riedle, 88)

Referee: G Barber

Ewood Park raises a glass to the Rovers' return



Sherwood: added to disciplinary woes



BLACKBURN ROVERS 1

LEEDS UNITED 0

by Keith Pike

EWOOD PARK regulars insisted that there had not been such a sustained din since Shearer and Sutton shot Blackburn Rovers to the title, and the echoes could yet be heard far beyond the confines of Blackburn. Adversity can destroy teams more easily than it can inspire them and, by their response on Saturday, it was clear that supporters had reaffirmed their passion for a side that had rediscovered its soul.

For the 22 minutes that they competed on level terms, Blackburn Rovers and Leeds United had served up some standard FA Carling Premiership fayre: excessive caution, unlimited energy and occasional malice, subjugating skill and numbing invention. Then Blackburn scored and, almost immediately, had a man sent off. It is arguable which was worse for Leeds.

Before half-time, the siege of John Filan's goal had been laid and, after that, it was like a re-enactment of Rorke's Drift. Blackburn's four penalty-area sentries stood tall and immoveable while, in front of them, a line of five foot-soldiers threw themselves at the advancing Leeds hordes. And all the while, animated to the point of self-combustion, Brian Kidd, the Blackburn manager, was patrolling the touchline and bellowing his orders: "Reload, aim, tackle!"

It is hard to argue that, even on this occasion, the good guys won. Blackburn created their own problems when Tim Sherwood, the captain, was dismissed for the second time this season, a yellow card for an off-the-ball skirmish with Lee Bowyer being followed by another for a foul on the same player. He could have no argument with the first booking and, while the second might have been harsh, Sherwood should not have given the referee the opportunity that he grasped with obvious relish.

Their subsequent rearguard action, though, was little short of heroic. Encouraged by a crowd that recognised the effort needed to contain a team as good as Leeds, Blackburn eventually gave up any pretence of attack and, for all that Leeds pounded them to the brink of submission, they never pushed them over the edge. Filan, the ball seldom less than 30 yards from his goal, had just one moment of real alarm and when Hasselbaink's awkward header bounced towards the bottom corner of his net six minutes from time, he plunged athletically to his left to claw the danger away.

Rovers' wretched disciplinary record is something that Kidd cannot shirk from addressing. They had 11 players dismissed in 14 months under his predecessor, Roy Hodgson — significantly failing to win on each occasion — and their squad does not possess the strength in depth that allows them to make light of suspensions. But this was a moment to accentuate the positives, and there were plenty of them.

Kidd chose not to single out individuals, although the contributions of Ward — on his debut — and Wilcox, in unfamiliar defensive roles, and the composure of Broomes, just 21, at the heart of defence were highly impressive. Nor would he dwell on a sequence that now reads played seven, won four, drawn three, thanks to Keith Gillespie's ugly toe-poke past Martyn — at fault with a sloppy initial clearance — and two Leeds defenders.

"I can't be bothered with records and runs," Kidd insisted. "I can only do my best and hope that it's good enough." He did elaborate on the "one for all" ethic, however, brought with him from Old Trafford. "If you want to win things in the Premiership, it has to be as a team, not as individuals," he said. "I have just come from a club where it was the same, where there were supposedly super stars. But there were no egoes there. It is the same here.

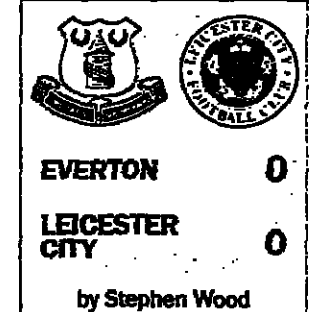
"The desire, hunger and ambition has got to come from within. What I can do is remind the players that they're in a cracking job and that they should be grateful. The crowd, too, has been nothing but supportive, but I've got to earn their respect." He could hardly have made a better start.

BLACKBURN ROVERS (4-4-2) J Filan — J Kenna, S Henchoz, M Broomes, C Davidson — K Gillespie, T Sherwood, W McKinlay, J Wilcox — A Ward, D Duff (sub: D Dunn, 24min)

LEEDS UNITED (4-4-2) N Martyn — G Halle, D Wetherall, J Woodgate (sub: A Smith, 46), D Granville — A I Haaland, L Bowyer, D Hopkin, B Ribeiro (sub: S McPhail, 73) — J F Hasselbaink, H Kewell.

Referee: R Harris.

Expectations add pressure to O'Neill's colourless task



EVERTON 0

LEICESTER CITY 0

by Stephen Wood

THERE was a theme running through the feelings expressed by many Everton fans before their team's meeting with Leicester City on Saturday. Martin O'Neill, the visiting manager, had come perilously close to accepting the manager's job at Goodison Park last summer: that he did not, they said, was because he could not handle the pressure of working for such a big club.

O'Neill's take on the situation became clear a couple of hours later. Although he never said as much, managing an aspiring-yet-unfashionable club was just as stressful: a no-win situation, in fact.

He could not tear himself away from the press lounge before he had hammered home his incredulity. "I received this letter from a supporter a couple of weeks ago," he said. "He has been a fan for 32 years and he was telling me that, since winning the Coca-Cola Cup in 1997, we had done nothing. What has he been watching for 30 years? It might seem nice and comfortable at Leicester, but people expect too much from us now."

Leicester will never be considered a big club. O'Neill knows that more than anyone, for it must occupy his thoughts and dreams every time he is connected with another vacancy. Instead, O'Neill's task at Leicester is to keep their status in the FA Carling Premiership, something that is becoming increasingly difficult.

"The amount of money in the Premiership means that the better players are tending to gravitate to the biggest clubs more and more," O'Neill said. "That gives us a problem because we've got some fantastic players, players that other clubs are always looking at.

"We've got to keep them if we're going to have any more success, but we've got to have some success soon if we're going to keep them. Heskey, Izzett, Lennon, Elliott — they all need a reason to stay with us."

The goalless draw was Everton's seventh from 11 home games this season and their total of three goals scored at Goodison Park has become the club's worst form at home in 121 years.

More worryingly, the dross is taking its toll on the players' minds and bodies. Michael Ball, a colleague of Heskey in the England Under-21 squad, is a talented wing back in need of a rest. Having played nonstop for more than a year, Ball is looking laboured and ineffective. "It has got to me a little bit," he said.

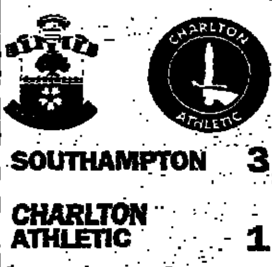
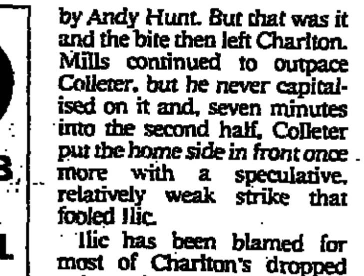
Foreign leagues would never countenance such treatment of their young stars, but, perhaps, foreign football is still more attractive than the celebrated English game. There was no evidence to the contrary on Saturday. Thomas Myhre, the Everton goalkeeper, and Kasey Keller, his counterpart at Leicester, each produced two excellent saves to ensure stalemate once again. The rest was embarrassing.

EVERTON (3-5-2) T Myhre — R Dunne, D Watson, D Unsworth — A Cleland, J Oster, D Hutchison, O Dacourt, M Ball — I Bakayoko, D Cadamarteri (sub: N Barmby, 75min)

LEICESTER CITY (4-4-2) K Keller — F Sinclair, M Elliott, S Walsh, R Ullathorne — A Impey, M Izzett, N Lennon, S Guppy — A Cottee, E Heskey

Referee: P Durkin

Toothless Charlton need bite

SOUTHAMPTON 3

CHARLTON ATHLETIC 1

by Alyson Rudd

IT IS painful. Watching Charlton Athletic is like having to visit the dentist every week to be told that everything possible is being done, the dentist is well-qualified, but, for some curious reason, he cannot remove the tooth. "Just yank it out," you scream, but the dentist gently tugs and wiggles it and nothing happens.

Alan Curbishley's side display the full range of tugs and wiggles. As a consequence, their football is attractive and studied and gives them the aura of the perfect underdog. They lose all the time — the defeat on Saturday was their ninth in a row in all competitions — but contribute sufficient guile to make the neutral sympathise.

Curbishley is amazed that their poor streak has not rendered them the obvious runt of the FA Carling Premiership litter, but, for as long as Nottingham Forest drag themselves through the motions and Everton and Sheffield Wednesday at least tease the bottom three that a collapse is imminent, all is not lost.

What Charlton need is either a new, top-class striker or the ability to replicate the five minutes of abrasiveness that preceded their equaliser against Southampton throughout entire games. Neither is a simple task. As for the abrasiveness, it is something that cannot be taught. It is instinct.

Southampton took the lead in near-comical fashion, with Hassan Kachloul dancing through the gaps in the intertwined limbs of the prostrate Charlton defence to deceive Sasa Ilic, the goalkeeper, with ease.

Angered, Curbishley's men stormed forward and their sustained bout of serious pressure was rewarded. Danny Mills outpaced Patrick Colleter on the right flank and then brushed the Frenchman aside to deliver a decent ball into the area. Southampton flapped, cleared but never well enough and the ball fell kindly for Redfearn, whose shot bounced off the line. Still Charlton snarled and, finally, Kinsella's cross was headed in by Andy Hunt. But that was it and the bite then left Charlton. Mills continued to outpace Colleter, but he never capitalised on it and, seven minutes into the second half, Colleter put the home side in front once more with a speculative, relatively weak strike that fooled Ilic.

Ilic has been blamed for most of Charlton's dropped points, but a goalkeeper's errors are all too obvious. Charlton's front pair were far more culpable yesterday, never, aside from the mad-dog hiatus, appearing comfortable.

Only one point separates these two teams, but, for all Southampton's defensive failings, they at least possess strikers with the ability to unnerve the opposition. Curbishley planned to emulate David Jones's formation towards the end and play with three forwards, but an injury to Steve Jones resulted in a straight swap with Martin Pringle, on loan from Benfica, who was making his debut. Maybe when Clive Mendonca recovers from his thigh strain, he and the tall, keen Pringle can give Charlton the air of intimidation that is so badly lacking.



Ilic: not wholly to blame

From Southampton's viewpoint, this match represented more than just three points. It gave them back some dignity after Charlton outclassed them to the tune of 5-0 at The Valley in August. David Jones never gloats and maintains the demeanour of a man who has just lost a winning lottery ticket, regardless of his team's result, but on Saturday he stood a little taller and sounded tougher. He has a springboard, an opportunity to march out of the relegation swampland and into greener pastures. Charlton, for now, are left waist-high in mud, flapping at the mosquitoes.

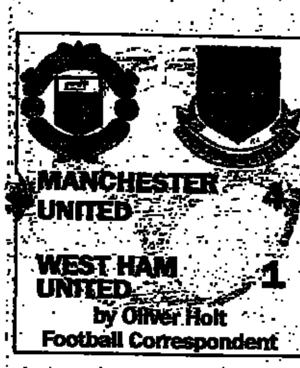
SOUTHAMPTON (4-3-1-2) P Jones — J Dodd, K Monkou, C Lundekvam, P Colleter — C Palmer, M Oakley, H Kachloul — [illegible] Hughes — J Beattie, E Ostenstad.

CHARLTON ATHLETIC (4-4-2) S Ilic — D Mills, R Rufus, E Youds, C Powell — S Newton, M Kinsella, N Redfearn, J Robinson — A Hunt, S Jones (sub: M Pringle, 72min)

Referee: G Poll

FA Carling Premiership: West Ham suffer one of their darker days in four-goal mauling

United display power surge



MANCHESTER UNITED 4
WEST HAM UNITED 1

by Oliver Holt
Football Correspondent

THE power was cut ten minutes before the game was due to kick off at Old Trafford yesterday afternoon. When it was restored 45 minutes later, the floodlights shone as brightly as ever but Manchester United performed only in flickers. It says much for the poverty of the play of West Ham United that they still looked like rabbits paralysed by the glare.

The level of United's dominance was almost embarrassing, particularly as they were far from their fluent best. West Ham, who could have gone sixth in the FA Carling Premiership if they had won, offered so little going forward that the eminence of their position almost beggars belief. United just picked them off with four of their hatful of chances.

Alex Ferguson, the United manager, had to give his dressing-room team-talk in darkness and he said later: "I think the players enjoyed it because it meant they could go to sleep."

The 4-1 victory, courtesy of two routine strikes from Andy Cole, a neat finish from Dwight Yorke and a late header from Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, took United above Arsenal into third place in the table, two points behind Chelsea and Aston Villa. It will take a better team than West Ham, though, to test their mettle as the championship race heats up.

It was easy to forget yesterday that Ferguson had sent Peter Schmeichel and Paul Scholes, two of his leading players, on holiday, not caring that they would be absent against Harry Redknapp's team. Schmeichel went to Barbados, Scholes to the Lake District and David Beckham was kept on the bench. Not that it really mattered: their team-mates still managed to look as though they were enjoying a winter break of their own.

If there was a bright spot for West Ham, it came in the Premiership debut of Joe Cole, their 17-year-old midfield player, who has long been tipped to be one of the great players of the future. Cole played for the entire second half and had a hand in Frank Lampard's consolation goal two minutes from the end. By then, however, his team had been humiliated by United's slicker passing and clever finishing.

A power failure had deprived the entire ground of electricity, but it took only 11 minutes of the match for United to take the lead. Hislop had already saved smartly from Andy Cole and watched helplessly as Giggs curled a shot just wide when Cole fed a sharp pass out to Yorke midway inside the box. Yorke sent his shot fizzing across Hislop and into the corner of the goal.

From then, the result was never in doubt. With Ian Wright and Paul Kitson absent through injury, West Ham had John Hartson and Trevor Sinclair in attack and they were overwhelmed by the presence of Jaap Stam, who seems to improve with every game, and Henning Berg. From that point, it was merely a case of the size of United's margin of victory.

Cole should have increased United's lead in the fourteenth minute, when Blomqvist's cross reached him inside the six-yard box, but he took an age to control the ball and, by the time that he mustered a shot, Hislop had managed to get close enough to smother it.

In fact, it was a surprise that it took United until five minutes before half-time to double their lead. Blomqvist was again the instigator, passing square to Butt. His shot bounced over Hislop's dive and, when it cannoned off the post, it fell kindly to Cole, who lashed it into an empty net.

Berkovic missed West Ham's first chance, five minutes after the interval, when he headed a cross from Lazaridis wide, and the visitors should have gone further behind a few minutes later when Cole hooked the ball over from close range after Irwin's shot had been parried by Hislop.

Irwin himself went close midway through the half, heading another rebound from Hislop's gloves just wide.

The third goal, though, was worth the wait. Irwin won a challenge with Pearce midway inside the West Ham half and fed Yorke. He twisted and turned past two challenges before playing a beautifully weighted reverse pass into the path of Cole, who, once more, had time aplenty to steady himself before rolling his shot past Hislop and into the corner.

United's supporters began to amuse themselves by comparing West Ham to Manchester City in song and airing their grievances about Glenn Hoddle's treatment of United players at England get-togethers. Their attention was prised away for one last time ten minutes from the end. Giggs's attempt to lob Hislop was saved, but Solskjaer headed the ball back towards goal. Rio Ferdinand made a desperate attempt to hook the ball clear but could only hack the ball on to the underside of the bar and into the net.

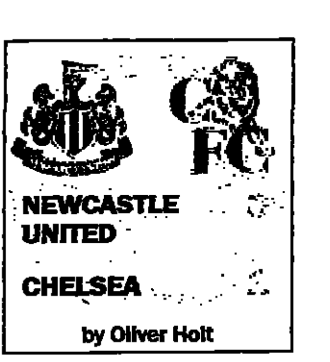
Lampard's late goal rescued a little dignity, but it was academic. If the flickering turns into full power, United will be hard to stop.

MANCHESTER UNITED (4-4-2): R van der Gouw — W Brown (sub: R Johnsen, 77min), H Berg, J Stam, D Irwin — R Giggs, R Keane (J Cruyff, 83), N Butt (sub: O G Solskjaer, 77), J Blomqvist — D Yorke, A Cole.
WEST HAM UNITED (3-5-2): S Hislop — S Potts, R Ferdinand, N Ruddock — I Pearce, E Berkovic, S Lomas, F Lampard, S Lazaridis — J Hartson, T Sinclair (sub. J Cole, 46)
Referee: M Reed



High-powered: Yorke takes a celebratory leap after his cool finish had given United an early lead at Old Trafford. Photograph by Marc Aspland

Vialli gives Gullit cause for the blues



NEWCASTLE UNITED
CHELSEA

by Oliver Holt

ONE was given a sheep's heart, another a zimmer frame, another a copy of *Mein Kampf*. They were meant as jokey Christmas presents from one Newcastle United player to another, but, as they left the pitch at St James' Park to the jeers of their disillusioned supporters, the gifts had become savage symbols of a tottering team struggling to play with passion.

Some of the catcalls, the yells that the players should have their wages docked after a lacklustre second-half performance, were typical excesses of a football crowd frustrated by another apparent demonstration of the fact that they are slipping further and further away from capturing the honours that were once within touching distance.

Newcastle are thirteenth in the FA Carling Premiership now. They have lost each of their past three league games and their supporters are still racked by doubts about the commitment to the club of their manager, Ruud Gullit, after his failure to buy a home in the area and his preference for commuting from Amsterdam.

Part of the problem on Saturday, of course, was that Newcastle were facing a Chelsea side that is increasingly revealing the depths of its talent. In the past, Chelsea would have buckled under the assault the Geordies subjected them to in the first half an hour. They are not the southern softies of legend any more, though. This Chelsea stood firm, even on a bitter January day so cold that it might have frozen the wings of the Angel of the North.

Once the new league leaders had gone ahead six minutes before half-time, they killed the game off ruthlessly. They did not waste possession, they kept it. They played the ball into the corners, they probed until Newcastle were exhausted and unable to exert any more pressure. And, when they had broken their hosts, they moved in to finish them off.

If Dennis Wise had not stubbed his toe on the turf when Dan Petrescu put him through in the 73rd minute, if Roberto di Matteo had not shot straight at Shay Given 15 minutes earlier, after another pass from Petrescu, the result would have reflected Chelsea's superior incisiveness and emphasised Newcastle's lack of guile.

There were a few encouraging signs for Gullit. Didier Domi, his new signing, looked impressively confident and composed on his debut at left wing back and Dietmar Hamann twice brought outstanding saves out of Ed de Goey with stinging free kicks that the Dutch goalkeeper did well to parry. Even when De Goey was beaten in the fifth minute, Leboeuf blocked Andersson's close-range shot on the line with his stomach.

Yet any hints of optimism were tempered by assertions from Hamann yesterday that the dressing-room was hopelessly split, that the foreign players questioned the commitment of their English colleagues and that he was aggrieved by Gullit's long absences from the training pitch. Once more, the aloof style that Gullit adopted at Stamford Bridge is causing friction.

At Chelsea, in contrast, the problems that had threatened to engulf Gullit in his final days — problems of team morale and tactics that had seen his side win only two of their last eight games under his control — appeared to have receded quickly under Vialli.

In Newcastle, they were the very epitomy of concentration and determination, more resolute than any Chelsea side has been for a long time. They may be missing Gustavo Poyet and Tore Andre Flo, but Vialli ran himself into the ground for the cause on Saturday and his team appears to have learnt the habit of absorbing injuries.

Their winner came in the 39th minute after a poor ball from Hughes had led to a Chelsea throw-in deep in Newcastle territory. It was worked quickly to Wise and his cross found Petrescu unmarked eight yards out. It was the simpliest of tasks to rifle it under the dive of Given.



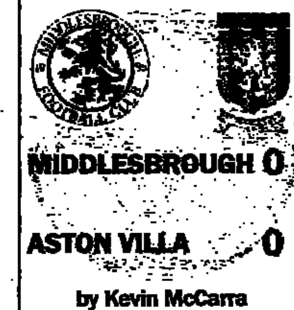
Petrescu: simple winner

"I hope I can cope with the pressure of having to play and manage," Vialli said. "I have to be on the ball. I have to be a better manager and player now than I have ever been before because now it is vital that I get it absolutely right. I think the players know that this is a difficult situation for me and they have to be even more responsible than before."

So far, they are living up to Vialli's expectations. Zimmer frames and sheep's hearts will not be figuring on their Christmas list this year.

NEWCASTLE UNITED (3-4-3). S Given — L Charvet, S Howey, A Hughes — N Solano (sub: R Lee, 74min), D Hamann, G Speed, D Domi — A Andersson (sub. L Saha, 57). A Shearer, S Glass
CHELSEA (4-4-2): E de Goey — A Ferrer, M Duberry, F Leboeuf, G Le Saux — D Petrescu, M Desailly, R Di Matteo, D Wise — G Zola (sub: M Nicholls, 89), G Vialli
Referee: D Gallagher

Gascoigne desperately seeking fulfilment



MIDDLESBROUGH 0
ASTON VILLA 0

by Kevin McCarra

PAUL GASCOIGNE'S delight in humour does not encompass a sense of the ridiculous. For the benefit of the television cameras on Saturday, he gave a grouchy account of foreign players who have brought their unreliable ways to these shores and demeaned the illustrious traditions of English football. Gascoigne ought to have corpsed, abandoning himself to laughter over the preposterously solemn lines that he was reciting.

Between this grave demeanour and his riotous past, there is a strain so severe that it could snap open the San Andreas Fault like a handbag and let San Francisco tumble in. Gascoigne, in mid-interview, might have wished for the ground to swallow him up, too, had he recalled previous indiscretions. All the same, it would be sad to see the Middlesbrough midfield player vanish.

His dubious moralising about diffident overseas signings is really an expression of disappointment that so few others share his own delirious love of the game. After a couple of poor performances, which ended in substitution, one saw 90 minutes of the besotted Gascoigne against Aston Villa. It did not always make for comfortable viewing.

The stamina proved adequate, but there was a desperation in his pursuit of the action, as if he was chasing the glories of his youth. A tackle that was reckless, even if it did connect with the ball marginally before he caught Lee Hendrie with his arm, earned Gascoigne his tenth booking of the season, bringing him closer to a brush with the authorities over his disciplinary record.

It is another department of the Football Association from which Gascoigne wishes to hear. The prospects of a return to the England side was a more absorbing topic than Saturday's match, in which Middlesbrough forced the visiting team back, but only allowed Villa to display their well-armoured back three. Once, Gascoigne would have pierced the chain mail.

He cannot do so nowadays, because there is no longer enough spring left in his legs to take him past opponents. Gascoigne knows it and so do the men who face him. On occasion, he passes a foot over the ball, as if threatening trickery, but the defenders never panic any more. They realise he will have to halt, pause and pick out a team-mate, who is, inevitably, less gifted.

Gascoigne's technique, though, is undamaged. Until arthritis takes hold, he will always be able to take an awkwardly dropping ball, as he did in one moment against Villa, and turn it into a perfect, volleyed 20-yard pass. Such mastery is precious and, with better players around him, international football might just suit him better than a grinding encounter in the FA Carling Premiership.

Villa could certainly have found a use for Gascoigne in midfield. Still lacking the injured Paul Merson, John Gregory's side were banal and inaccurate in their approach-work and an acceptable result had to be laboriously extracted from the afternoon by, in particular, two strong and dependable centre backs, Ugo Ehiogu and Gareth Southgate.

Middlesbrough, after three successive defeats, were insistent in their efforts and might have scored, after 38 minutes, when Michael Oakes, the Villa goalkeeper, pawed at a Curtis Fleming cross, leaving Dean Gordon to strike a drive that was blocked by Southgate. Otherwise, there were only unavailing deflections and competent saves. The division of the spoils gladdened the managers more than the spectators.

There had been too much dull industry. "You can play well without scoring any goals," Julian Joachim stated in the match programme, while explaining his role. There is truth in his words, but what sort of game would we have if diligence completely expunged flair? The people at the Riverside Stadium on Saturday who made up a record attendance of 34,643 know the answer.

MIDDLESBROUGH (3-5-2): M Schwarzer — G Festa, S Vickers, G Pallister — C Fleming, N Maddison, P Gascoigne, A Townsend, D Gordon — H Ricard (sub: M Beck, 83min), B Deane.
ASTON VILLA (3-5-2): M Oakes — U Ehiogu, G Southgate, G Barry — S Watson, R Scimeca (sub: S Grayson, 69), I Taylor, L Hendrie, A Wright — J Joachim, D Dublin
Referee: U Rennie.

Decoding the Di Canio letters

George Caulkin reads between the lines after Saturday's goalless draw between Sheffield Wednesday and Tottenham

Dear Mr Wilson,

I was hoping that you would again see fit to excuse my Paulo from games today. As you know, he has not quite been himself recently — in fact, I've never seen the poor dear looking so low — and I'm afraid that strenuous physical activity is quite out of the question. I realise that I have made this request a few times now and appreciate both your tolerance and patience.

Forgive my chutzpah, but I spotted a small grammatical error in your last note to me. You wrote that you consider Paulo "a complete shirker"; I think what you meant to say was complete *striker*, but naturally my boy is concerned that either you or his team-mates on the school team might consider him idle. Only this afternoon, he got out of bed to tell me so.

Of course, we will gladly comply with your demand to seek an independent medical assessment of Paulo's condition and, as a further display of our good faith, we would be happy to continue washing the team's dirty kit — although perhaps not in public, if you understand my meaning. In the meantime, I enclose a small token of my esteem. And please let me know how Wednesday are faring.

Yours etc.,
Mrs Di Canio.

Dear Mrs Di Canio,

First off, can I just say how much the lads appreciated the side of Parma ham you sent us with your letter. I must admit, I was a bit dubious — I thought you were dropping a hint about where Paulo might like to play next season — but, to be fair, it was top-notch stuff.

Having said that, some of the English boys weren't overly keen (didn't go with their beans, apparently), but I told them to stop being such Fancy Dans. Honestly, I don't understand the modern player sometimes, although it's probably best I don't carry on with that particular subject; bit of a sore point, as I'm sure you're aware.

Since you ask, we actually played quite well on Saturday. We were up against a southern lot — you know the type — who were on a bit of run, but we absolutely battered them.

I've got to be happy with a clean sheet and a point, but, if I'm honest, we really should have won. Dejan Stefanovic fluffed a first-half sitter and Paulo's mate, Beni Carbone, had a shot deflected over the crossbar, you see.

That brings me to the nub of the matter. As I told the chap from the school magazine at the weekend: "We need somebody with the ability to score goals. We've been in this position many times before, where we've been commanding games and the chances have come along, but we've not been able to stick them in the net."

Put simply, we miss Paulo. Badly. At the end of the day. Something has to give, Mrs D. I've lost count of the times Paulo has skipped training, of the matches he has missed. It might have cost us against Tottenham if Steffen Iversen's shot hadn't been blocked or if their big French lad, David Ginola, had won a penalty.

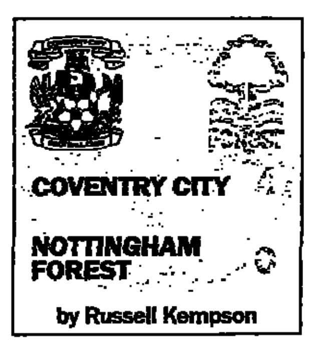
We can't afford to be losing games. Expulsion may be my only option. If nothing else, we need the shirt back.

Yours in sport,
Danny Wilson

'Paulo has not been himself recently. Strenuous physical activity is quite out of the question'

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (4-4-2): P Srnicek — P Atherton, E Thome, D Walker, A Hinchcliffe — N Alexandersson, W Jonk, D Stefanovic, P Rudi — R Humphreys, B Carbone.
TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (4-4-2): I Walker — S Carr, L Young, S Campbell, A Sinton — D Anderton (sub: S Clemence, 27min), A Nielsen, S Freund, D Ginola (sub: J Edinburgh, 87) — S Iversen, L Ferdinand (sub: C Armstrong, 9).
Referee: G Willard.

Forest exposed by Huckerby



COVENTRY CITY
NOTTINGHAM FOREST

by Russell Kempson

IT WAS an admirable performance: frank, to the point and devoid of the transparent bull so frequently offered by his peers. "I can't turn this around," he said, "not with this bunch of players."

Micky Adams, thus, condemned Nottingham Forest to a life of misery for the remainder of the FA Carling Premiership season. Relegation beckons, after 18 successive matches without a win, and he fired from the lip.

Therein lies the rub. Adams is only the caretaker manager, keeping warm what little is left of the Forest fire until the plc boys at the City Ground can find a successor to Dave Bassett. He can therefore call it as it is, without the need for excuses, clichés or chicanery.

It might not enhance his prospects of staying with Forest when Bassett's replacement arrives — and perhaps he senses already that the new broom will sweep clean — but Forest's plight appears to be terminal, so what the hell.

"Whoever takes over has got a real job on his hands," Adams said. "The players are as low as they're ever going to be and the air of uncertainty needs to be resolved quickly.

"And no, I don't want the job. I don't go touting for jobs that I know I have no chance of getting. I came to this club to work under Dave Bassett and I was devastated when he left. When the new man arrives, I will sit down and talk to him. We'll take it from there."

Ron Atkinson, 60 in March, the "new" man, is expected to turn up sometime this week, when he can drag himself away from a holiday in Barbados. He will breeze into Nottingham — face a-beaming, teeth a-flashing, tan a-glowing — and accept his short-term appointment amid much pomp and ceremony.

He possibly doesn't want the job, either, yet he can take it safe in the knowledge that Forest are probably doomed anyway and that none of the blame will be hurled in his direction when he guides them into the Nationwide League.

And if he should by chance script the sequel to *The Great Escape*, for a substantial basic salary, he will also collect an attractive bonus, enough to be able to purchase a small West Indies isle on which he could while away his closing years as the part-time boss of Coconut FC. Forest provides the perfect swansong for Big Ron: minimum pain, maximum gain, then back to the beach.

All of which, at Highfield Road on Saturday, tended to overshadow a marvellous hat-trick from Darren Huckerby, the Coventry City striker, who plundered a similar haul in the 7-0 FA Cup defeat of Macclesfield Town the previous week. Enigmatic, inconsistent and often selfish he may be, but when he locks in on the target, he is a sight to behold.

"You could see the apprehension on the faces of the Forest defenders," Gary McAllister, the Coventry captain, said. "They were terrified of him." Gordon Strachan, the Coventry manager, concurred. "There are only certain players in the world who can do things like Darren did," he said.

Huckerby had already struck an upright, after a raking run from the Coventry half, before again penetrating the Forest defence, one minute from half-time, when he drove in a fierce, low half-volley after Aloisi had flicked on Soltvedt's cross. One minute after half-time, his cute, angled chip evaded Beasant and bounced over the line via the far post.

Telfer increased the lead with a rasping volley and then Huckerby, born in Nottingham but of Notts County persuasion, administered the *coup de grâce*, gaining possession in the centre circle and brushing aside the limp attentions of Doig, Chettle and Hjelde before carressing his shot past Beasant. Poetry in motion. Had it stemmed from the feet of Michael Owen or Ronaldo, the world would have sat back and gasped.

Forest were wretched, though. Adams, who once played for Coventry, stood helplessly on the touchline as Atkinson, who once managed Coventry, lounged serenely under the palm trees. "Ron is the only man for the job," Bryan Richardson, the Coventry chairman, said. "He has a presence. He brought everyone alive when he came here." Whether Big Ron can raise the dead is another matter.

COVENTRY CITY (4-4-2): M Hedman — R Nilsson, R Shaw, P Williams, D Burrows (sub. S Shilton, 72min) — P Telfer, G McAllister (sub: B Quinn, 88), T E Soltvedt, N Whelan — J Aloisi (sub: D Jackson, 67), D Huckerby
NOTTINGHAM FOREST (3-5-2): D Beasant — J O Hjelde, S Chettle, C Doig — D Lyttle, A Johnson, S Gemmill (sub: N Quashie, 83), C Bart-Williams (sub: I Woan, 71), C Armstrong (sub: D Freedman, 56) — S Stone, P van Hooijdonk.
Referee: P Jones.

Gascoigne taking tablets to fight off depression

By George Caulkin

PAUL GASCOIGNE'S journey from despair to the verge of an international recall has encompassed more than the cutting out alcohol. The rehabilitation of the Middlesbrough midfield player is being eased by a course of anti-depressants, the player revealed yesterday.

"I'm trying to enjoy my football as much as I can. I'm on these tablets which don't make me excited and don't get me down, but sometimes they do affect me in certain games. I hope people will appreciate that," Gascoigne, 31, told *Sky Sports News*.

"I need to be on them," he said. "Some games I'm not up for it, but as long as I can give it 110 per cent, I'll be honest with the gaffer. If I'm not feeling too good, I won't play because I don't want to let the lads down."

Paul Alcock, the referee who was pushed to the ground by Paulo Di Canio, the Sheffield Wednesday striker, in September, expects to be back in action in the FA Carling Premiership by the end of this month. Alcock, whose existing back complaint was exacerbated by the Italian's shove, will have a scan today after four weeks of rest and is hopeful he will receive the all clear.

Geoff Thompson, the acting chairman of the Football Association, pledged yesterday to rebuild bridges with Uefa, football's European governing body. He admitted that relations were damaged last year when the FA changed its vote in the election for the new Fifa chairman, backing Sepp Blatter instead of Lennart Johansson, the Uefa president.

Juninho, the Brazil midfield player, says that Aston Villa would be his "first choice" club if he decides to return to England from Atlético Madrid. Gianni Paladini, Juninho's agent, indicated that the player would be willing to reduce his wage demands.

Oscar Garcia, the Barcelona striker, said yesterday that although he understood Chelsea were interested in signing him, he would prefer to stay with the Catalan club and fight for his place.

Festive break prompts an avalanche of goals in overseas leagues

Europe offers refresher course

ROB HUGHES



Overseas View

AT Old Trafford, the lights went out, probably through exhaustion, following England's habit of playing so many games either side of Christmas. In Italy, Spain, and even down in the Cape, there is evidence of the benefits of giving a man a break.

The holiday refreshed goalscorers in Serie A so much that Cagliari beat AS Roma 4-3, Parma won 6-3 away to Piacenza and, ominously for Manchester United, who face Internazionale in the quarter-finals of the European Cup in March, Ronaldo, Roberto Baggio and Ivan Zamorano were in joyous mood against Venezia.

Just a month ago, cynics were saying that it was all over for Ronaldo. Inter gave him time off in Rio, with instructions to prepare himself, body and soul, for United in the spring. Apparently, he cannot wait. After three minutes yesterday, Ronaldo scored a penalty. After 71 minutes, he scored from free play and, in between, he frolicked while Baggio struck once and Zamorano hit a hat-trick. Inter won 6-2 and the cares of the world dropped off Ronaldo's shoulders.

The 60,000 crowd in the San Siro believed that they were witnessing a revival. Parma followers felt the same as Abel Balbo, their veteran Argentina striker, also notched three goals in Parma's storming victory. Roberto Muzzi, once of Roma, scored twice for Cagliari against his old team.

Alas for David Platt, his Sampdoria side did not catch the new year habit. Platt's first signing, Lee Sharpe, from Leeds United, was a second-half substitute, but Sampdoria failed to capitalise on the fact that Bologna played virtually the entire second half with ten men and finished level at 1-1.

Juventus achieved the same score at home to Bari and AC Milan equalised with seven minutes to spare at Empoli, although Christian Ziege, Milan's saviour, received his second yellow card of the game for his excessive celebrations.

For Ken Bates — after a weekend in which he acknowledged that the Football Association is not ready to take him as its chairman — the good news is that Juventus does not want anyone from Stamford Bridge either. There had been speculation that Gianluca Vialli was the choice to replace Marcello Lippi as the coach this summer, but Umberto Agnelli, the Bates of Juventus, suggested that Carlo Ancelotti, the man who sold Gianfranco Zola to Chelsea from Parma, will be the man.

Coaches come and coaches go. Bruce Grobbelaar, the former Liverpool goalkeeper, who was cleared of match fixing two years ago, has begun his transition from entertainer to trainer. He begins work this week as the manager of Seven Stars, of South Africa's Premier Soccer League, and, having turned 40, Grobbelaar will relish being a free man in the country of his birth.

Not so free is Jésus Gil y Gil, president of Atlético Madrid, whose generosity with gifts, such as gold watches to players, was matched by a gargantuan appetite for controversy. Now Gil, the mayor of Marbella, is in prison accused of embezzling £2 million from the Marbella town hall for Atlético.

"Everything is fine," Gil said, sarcastically. "I'm relaxed. I'm going to jail. This way, the lynching campaign against me is over."

While he suffers, his lawyer protests that others at Atlético did the deal, which put the Marbella name on Atlético shirts without Gil's knowledge. The club offered free entry to their Primera League game against Extremadura yesterday as a "Gil is innocent" demonstration. Some fans went instead to the Spanish Football Association to daub slogans and smash windows and presidents of four rival clubs — Real Betis, Real Valladolid, Real Mallorca and Sevilla — were subpoenaed to give evidence before the judge.

There were smiles in Catalonia, where the Barcelona president, Josep Lluís Núñez, sought his pound of flesh for Gil's latest outburst, insinuating that Barcelona "bought off" referees. Núñez is having a ball because his team has scored ten goals in two league games, with Rivaldo scoring four of them.

So, Rivaldo is happy, Ronaldo is happy, but one Brazilian player who is not happy and whose agent would rather he plays in England, is Juninho. His problem is not the president but the coach at Atlético, Arrigo Sacchi, and Juninho's agent says that the little Brazilian would like a return flight to England, not back to Middlesbrough, but to Aston Villa.

Meanwhile, one captive viewer — Gil — saw Real Madrid, his club's greatest rivals, succumb 2-1 on television in Mallorca. It was a wretched evening for Manuel Sanchis, whose own goal and later dismissal allowed Mallorca to consolidate their position at the top of the table. It was a delight for Dani — alias Daniel García Lara — for whom Real Madrid paid Zaragoza £1 million and off-loaded without giving him one full match.

"Beating Real Madrid was a big motivation for me," Dani said. "Mallorca is the best thing that has happened to me because Héctor Cúper is a great coach, who recognises my abilities." One man's fulfilment is another's failure.



Zamorano, of Internazionale, is held aloft by Ronaldo, his team-mate, while on his way to a hat-trick against Venezia

Hibernian gain from consistent displays of flying Finn

By Phil Gordon

EVEN Mixu Paatelainen would nod in agreement that he is not worthy of lacing George Best's drinks, never mind the great man's boots. However, the Finland striker is proving that he is far more capable hangover cure.

Best's flirtation with Hibernian 19 years ago was a bittersweet cocktail of sellout crowds and relegation, but he failed to stick around when the Edinburgh club last embraced the Scottish League first division in 1980. Instead, the world's most charismatic winger, who was flown up to Scotland every Friday night and paid an unheard-of £1,000 a game, was off on another flight of fancy, leaving others to pick up the pieces.

Hibernian returned to the premier division then at the first attempt and, 19 years on, they seem certain to complete the task equally quickly. Paatelainen's ninth goal since his transfer from Wolverhampton Wanderers four months ago launched the 2-1 success away to St Mirren on Saturday, stretching Hibernian's lead at the top to 11 points.

Unlike Best's day, there is no longer any margin for error for those demoted from Scotland's top division: only the first division champions gain promotion. Hibernian — and Paatelainen — are ensuring that the margin is as wide as possible.

They dwarf the rest of the division, not just in finances (home crowds of more than 14,000 are ensuring that the harsh realities of life outside the Scottish Premier League are being kept at bay) but in tradition, though it is unlikely that the achievement of Alex McLeish's side in extending its unbeaten run to 18 games will be earn a large chapter in the history of a club that has been champion of Scotland four times and reached the semi-finals of the very first European Cup in 1956.

Yet Paatelainen recognises that such scale, even in the Lilliputian environment of the Scottish first division, carries problems. "Hibs are the team everyone wants to beat in this division," he said, reflecting on a success earned despite Steve Crawford being dismissed in the 43rd minute, to the delight of a hostile Love Street crowd.

"It was the same when I was in the English first division with Bolton and Wolves. You become a target when you are with a bigger club — but I would rather have this sort of pressure than be with a struggling side."

The Finland player's sublime 51st-minute goal, finishing off a fine move with Russell Latapy, another recent acquisition, from FC Porto, by thrashing in a left-foot shot from 20 yards, was embellished by a late goal from Paul Hartley, the substitute, purchased before Christmas.

Paatelainen's debut for Hibernian came on the same ground in September, when St Mirren won 2-0, but as the success on Saturday indicated, it is not just personnel that has changed since then.

"There is more confidence now," he explained. "I think there was still a hangover from relegation, but this was an important result and could turn out to be one of the key games."

The ambitions of Falkirk, in second place, receded when Derek Holmes's last-minute goal provided Raith Rovers with a precious 2-1 win, yet an even greater cost was being counted by the seven other home clubs forced to postpone lower-division fixtures because of frozen pitches. The Premier League's shutdown now appears to be very timely.

Ford ensures Mansfield stay on the right road

Mansfield Town	3
Brentford	1

By Richard Hobson

IF BRENTFORD arrived at Field Mill with a superiority complex, as Ron Noades, the manager, appeared to suggest afterwards, then they should have left with a less flattering self-assessment. Riding on the emotion of Tony Ford's record 824th league appearance, Mansfield Town proved to be superior in every aspect to record a fifth successive home win.

The first crowd beyond 4,000 this season helped to create a slightly surreal atmosphere at a ground that is badly in need of redevelopment. Midway through the first half, Kerr almost scored for Mansfield with a scorpion kick — the skill demonstrated memorably by René Higuita, the Colombia goalkeeper, at Wembley a few years ago — while Ford, sprinting up and down the right flank like a colt rather than a 39-year-old veteran, was cheered even after being caught offside.

"It was a memorable day and the result made it even better," Ford, a creditable figure, said. The nearest that he came to scoring, an optimistic volley from some 25 yards, soared well wide, but his influence was immense during an opening half-hour in which Mansfield endorsed their credentials for promotion from the Nationwide League third division.

Importantly, they crowned this period of domination with goals. In the twelfth minute, Lormor took advantage of indecision by Hreidarsson to meet a long clearance by Bowling before chipping over Dearden. Three minutes later, Ford's low cross eluded the whole defence and Harper, arriving at the far post, extended the lead at the second opportunity. Brentford reduced the arrears when a dreadful mistake by Schofield a minute before half-time enabled Owusu a free run, which he took full advantage of to score.

Yet, despite the runs from defence of Hreidarsson, Mansfield created the better chances in the second half and Christie, a substitute, duly scored a third goal near the end.

"If you think a game is going to be easy and you give less than 100 per cent, then you are going to struggle," Noades said.

Just a single point now separates three clubs — Brentford, Cambridge United and Mansfield — behind Cardiff City, the leaders, and Ford senses promotion for the fourth time in his career exactly 20 seasons after the first, at Grimsby Town. "Brentford have spent a lot of money on their team, so to play good football and beat them shows how we are coming on," he said.



Ford: sprinting like a young colt

MANSFIELD TOWN (3-5-2): I Bowling — M Peters, J Schofield, W Hackett — T Ford (sub: L Williams, 76min), D Kerr, J Walker, G Tallon, S Harper — L Peacock, T Lormor (sub: I Christie, 83)

BRENTFORD (4-3-3): K Dearden — D Powell, R Quinn, H Hreidarsson, I Anderson (sub: C Oatway, 75) — M Rowlands, W Aspinall, G Mahon — D Bryan (sub: L Fortune-West, 66), L Owusu, A Scott

Referee: B Jordan

Ford survive brace of red cards

Ford United	4
Kidsgrove Athletic	2

By Walter Gammie

A TRYING week for Dennis Elliott ended happily on Saturday. It was his birthday and his Ford United side marked the occasion by beating last season's losing semi-finalists to reach the last 16 of the FA Carlsberg Vase at Rush Green Road.

Elliott responded to the departure of Paul Downes, his assistant, and all but Steve Brice of his coaches by laying out the kit, pumping up footballs and then inspiring Ford to a tigerish performance against the North Western Trains League champions.

Jeff Wood gave Ford a flying start with a fine turn and shot, but Kidsgrove replied with panache, Scott Dundas equalising from the penalty spot and then sprinting clear to beat Chapman, who, moments earlier, had denied Batho with a magnificent one-handed paw of a save as the forward tried to chip him.

Ford roared back after half-time. Lord scored with a shot that went in off a defender's heel and added his second with a left-foot thump that bounced in off the underside of the bar. Dundas struck a swerving 30-yard shot that hit the bar before Reilly forced home a flick-on from a corner to stretch Ford's lead.

Then their troubles began. With 20 minutes to go, Lord was sent off after an altercation with Dundas. Elliott reorganised. The goalmouth incidents intensified. Chapman once dropped the ball on his line and only undignified scrambling kept it out.

Beck was then shown a second yellow card and dismissed after a flare-up in the area. "It was mistaken identity," Elliott said. "The linesman got the wrong man." Mountford headed wide of an open goal and Batho, standing at the far post, contrived a clearing header when all he needed was to let the ball run off him into the net.

The roar of triumph and the rattle of the metal cage from the last man down the tunnel, Chapman, the player-chairman, spoke volumes of the emotion generated by Ford's nine men holding on for their victory.

The FA Cup run that took Ford to Preston North End left more than £10,000 in the bank towards the dream of laying an astroturf pitch. Swelling the coffers by reaching Wembley in the Vase is unlikely, Elliott admits. He has a small squad and it will be stretched making up the backlog of matches in pursuit of the Ryman League third division title.

FORD UNITED (3-4-3): J Chapman — L Fowler, T Bock, R Gardner — D Reilly, T Hughes (sub: B Wills, 72min), M Lord, J Dennis — M Wade (sub: S Munday, 70), J Wood, D Harding

KIDSGROVE ATHLETIC (4-4-2): S Bennett — D Chotwyn, S Davies, W Mountford, J Batho — D Wilks, C Lovatt (sub: M Hudson, 53), S Dundas, P Kelly — D Hobby, R Bailey

Referee: S Tomlin

Nationwide League: Bolton underline their attacking potency with easy victory

Venables bemused by supine Palace

Bolton Wanderers..............3
Crystal Palace...................0

By Stephen Wood

TERRY VENABLES, the Crystal Palace manager, stood motionless on the touchline for much of a tortuous afternoon at the Reebok Stadium yesterday, possibly wondering why he was there. Renowned for his tactical awareness, his players looked as disorganised as a professional team could do, handing Bolton Wanderers an easy return to the play-off positions in the Nationwide League first division.

By contrast, Colin Todd, the Bolton manager, was an animated figure, always cajoling his charges, sometimes criticising them. Rarely does he appear to be a contented individual, even when his players are as superior as they were yesterday. There is no doubt that Bolton's strength remains their potency in attack. When they put their mind to it, only Sunderland, the league leaders, can match their threat and, indeed, their goalscoring feats. Against Palace, the contest was over by the 23rd minute and distinctly uncompetitive by the 33rd.

By then, Bolton were three goals to the good. Palace appeared to employ four at the back, with Hayden Mullins protecting them by virtue of his defensive role in midfield. Such a move may have underlined the respect in which Bolton's capabilities were held by Venables, but, not helped by the haphazard way in which it was carried out, the system was of precious little use.

Both clubs were relegated from the FA Carling Premiership last season and both managers have insisted that the squads that they now possess are good enough to take them back up to the top-flight immediately. In Venables's case, that claim looks rather hollow and Palace's position of fourteenth today — 11 points adrift of the play-off zone — flatters them.

They have won only twice on their travels this season and, to add to Venables's problems, there is the speculation over Matt Jansen, the talented young striker. Coveted by Premiership clubs, including Blackburn Rovers and Newcastle United, Jansen was absent yesterday. There were rumours that he was spending the day in Newcastle, getting acquainted with his future surroundings.

Venables said: "The lad came to see me and told me that, because of all the speculation surrounding him, he was not mentally tuned in to play. That disappointed me. He could be on the point of a move. Something could happen this week."

Palace had to part with Paul Warhurst last week, sold to Bolton for £800,000. They could have done with Warhurst yesterday and Venables added: "It was a strange time to sell Paul, but that's life. Everyone's a bit low at the moment, but at least we showed some character and aggression to stem the flow of Bolton's attacks in the second half. We were so shocking in the first half, it could have been far worse."

Bolton's quartet of players from Scandinavia were, as ever, central to that flow. Todd has insisted that they speak only English around the club, for fear of cliques appearing within the dressing-room. Their understanding on the field is certainly undisputed, with Frandsen the most impressive.

It was Frandsen, the Denmark international, who won a free kick after three minutes, from which Bob Taylor headed in a cross by Scott Sellars at the far post. Arnar Gunnlaugsson, the Iceland international, then supplied Michael Johansen, another Dane, who sold dummies to Crowe and Tuttle before placing his right-foot shot past Kevin Miller, the Palace goalkeeper.

Ten minutes later, Frandsen played in Claus Jensen, the third Denmark player, and, despite calls for offside from the visiting team, he rounded Miller and side-footed into the empty net.

"Winning is a good habit," Todd said. "We are earning the right to win games by the way we are playing and creating chances, but this clean sheet pleases me just as much."

BOLTON WANDERERS (4-4-2): J Jaaskelainen — N Cox, M Fish, P Warhurst, M Whitlow (sub: R Elliott, 82min) — M Johansen, C Jensen, P Frandsen, S Sellars (sub: R Gardner, 76) — A Gunnlaugsson, B Taylor (sub: D Holdsworth, 76).

CRYSTAL PALACE (4-4-2): K Miller — Sun Jihai, S Burton, D Tuttle, J Crowe (sub: D Amsalem, 68) — C Foster, H Mullins, Fan Zhiyi, S Rodger (sub: N Rizzo, 74) — C Morrison (sub: M Bent, 57), L Bradbury.

Referee: R Pearson.



Wright, warming up before the game at Portman Road on Saturday, is one of several exciting young Ipswich Town players. Photograph: Rob Howarth

Ipswich ignore ghosts of past glories

Rob Hughes looks at a club banking on tradition, youth and loyalty to get back among the big boys

On a chill winter's day in Suffolk, even a home defeat at Portman Road cannot dispel the warmth of Ipswich Town. It wraps itself around you, convinces you that, even at a level below the multimillion-pound FA Carling Premiership, there is life and regeneration within professional football. Ipswich, now, as once before, a place of Dutch imported bulbs and home-grown youth, have had a quite extraordinary influence on the English game, out of all proportion to its size or wealth.

On Saturday, despite the surprise 1-0 home defeat to Grimsby Town, Ipswich blooded a new Dutch wing-back, Fabian Wilnis, and blended him with Richard Logan and Titus Bramble — a pair of 17-year-olds who, like more than half the professional staff at the club, are products of the youth system.

This is also the club that provided England with two managers, Sir Alf Ramsey and Bobby Robson, as well as two captains, in Terry Butcher and Mick Mills. If David Sheepshanks, the Ipswich chairman, is chosen to lead the Football Association this summer, it would surely bring to Suffolk and to Lancaster Gate the final link in a chain that has had remarkable previous success. Ramsey guided England to World Cup glory in 1966 and Robson, who first came to Ipswich 30 years ago this week, took them to the semi-finals in 1990, the furthest England have progressed abroad.



Sheepshanks: legacy

Between them, these managers won for Ipswich almost everything that the English game provides and, under Robson, the Uefa Cup as well. They are the first to admit that these achievements would not have been possible without the trust, loyalty and perspectives instilled into Portman Road by the Cobbold family, brewers and racehorse owners of the vicinity.

George Burley, a former Town player, is now at the helm and trying to recover the threads of former glories. He is attempting to manage the team to play the composed and imaginative football with which Ramsey won the first division title in 1962 and Robson won the FA Cup in 1978. You can feel the presence of the past.

Sheepshanks, like the Cobbolds, had an Eton education and, like them, found football compelling. He got his first taste of the sport at 12, when the gamekeeper on his father's farm requested permission to take "the lad" to the game. "Two matches, and I was hooked," Sheepshanks said. He is 46, fully aware of the legacy he inherits at Portman Road and just as aware that, with his background in marketing, things will have to be done in a more commercial way than in the past.

Indeed, as a recently co-opted member of the Uefa marketing committee, Sheepshanks is considering whether to stand for election as the FA chairman. He knows that the very essence of English authority has to be restored from top to bottom of the English game — and, most certainly, overseas.

Excitingly, Ipswich also possess players for England's future. Richard Wright is an under-21 regular and one of the few outstanding young goalkeepers that England has produced in recent years. On Saturday, he misjudged a punch and it was punished as Peter Handyside, the Grimsby defender, responded with with an overhead kick that beat him, but he has conceded just 17 goals in the first division this season.

Kieron Dyer, 20, has a future at the top of English football. Though slender, he is seldom dispossessed of the ball and Ipswich have made him the fulcrum of their side in the way that Osvaldo Ardiles once was to Argentina and Tottenham Hotspur.

It was in the same season that Ardiles and Ricky Villa were introduced to English football at Tottenham, that Robson brought the brilliant Dutch midfield pair of Arnold Muhren and Frans Thijssen to Town. Important as they were, undoubtedly opening insular English eyes to the craft of players on the Continent, Muhren and Thijssen were only passing through.

There are people in the background at Ipswich, vital people, who have been there through all the triumphs. Pat Godbold retired last season after serving as secretary to every post-war manager that the club has had: retired, but not separated, for she has been appointed archivist.

"I think I got the job because I'm the oldest one around," she said with a smile. It is fascinating to share her undying enthusiasm for football and the club. "The Cobbolds were wonderful people to work for and so astute that I laugh when people say they could not have coped with the new commercial age," she said. Ramsey and Robson treated her as a family member and Sheepshanks would not dream of allowing her to leave while she remains so enthusiastic.

Similarly, David Rose, club secretary for 40 years, holds the keys not only to the boardroom but also to the wisdom that, like the white wine so loved by the late John and Patrick Cobbold, is the essence of this uplifting club.

"The wonderful thing about football is that it is a business which each May wipes the slate clean and we all can say we are going to win the FA Cup, the League, everything that's going. It's been a fantastic life, we have had far more fun here than failure. Today [Saturday] you saw our new youngsters and out of the window you can see the Ipswich Town Football Academy. They are our lifeblood and if it is to go on — to regenerate, to use the chairman's phrase — you have to bat long. It's a game for the youngsters and it's fun being around to direct them in the Ipswich way."

Oxford are denied by Phillips's heroics

Oxford United 0
Bristol City.........................0

By Pat Gibson

WHERE there is life, there is hope. Oxford United may be struggling to avoid relegation from the Nationwide League first division, they may even be close to extinction because of their crippling financial crisis, yet the old Manor Ground could hardly have been more vibrant on Saturday.

An FA Cup fourth-round tie against Chelsea in a fortnight's time, bringing with it much-needed revenue, will not make much of a dent in debts said to be approaching £14 million, but the prospect drew a crowd of 9,434, the highest of the season.

Many supporters stayed on after the game to claim their Cup tickets, undeterred by the failure to beat Bristol City, their fellow strugglers, whose influx of overseas players since the installation of Benny Lennartsson as director of coaching has not quite put them in Chelsea's class.

Not that Chelsea should take anything for granted. Even the experienced Lennartsson was startled by the way that Oxford set about his side in a kind of rough diamond formation that would have brought them three goals in the first 15 minutes but for some fine saves by Steve Phillips in the Bristol goal.

Bristol not only survived but went close to winning themselves, Torpey having one header tipped on to the bar and another cleared off the line. That would have been too much for Malcolm Shotton, the beleaguered Oxford manager, who complained: "It is just our luck at the moment to keep coming up against keepers playing out of their skins."

As for Lennartsson, he was just relieved to have ended a run of seven successive away defeats. "I will be giving our goalkeeping coach [Mike Gibson] a bottle," he said. "I'm not saying what will be in it, but it will be from Scotland."

OXFORD UNITED (5-1-3-1) P Gerrard — C Remy, M Warren, M Watson, P Gilchrist, P Powell — L Robinson — N Banger, M Murphy, J Beauchamp — D Windass.
BRISTOL CITY (4-4-2) S Phillips — J Brennan, M Shail, R Edwards, M Bell — S Murray, I Tistimetanu, M Hewlett (sub A Locke 79min), S Andersen — A Akinbiyi, S Torpey.
Referee: A Leake.

Reid pinpoints vital factor for Sunderland

Queens Park Rangers 2
Sunderland.........................2

By Nick Szczepanik

IF AND when Sunderland take their place in the FA Carling Premiership next season — and results on Saturday made "when" more likely than ever — Peter Reid, the manager, knows that he will have to strengthen his squad. He is equally aware that he cannot afford to do it at the expense of the team spirit, which enabled his side to come from behind and claim a deserved point, despite being reduced to ten men for the entire second half at Loftus Road.

According to Reid, this spirit was born out of despair during a stop for a drink on the way back to the North East after defeat in the Nationwide League first division play-off final against Charlton Athletic last season. "It was crushing," he recalled, "but we got together and that was the catalyst."

Of course, spirit is insufficient by itself and it was as much Reid's tactical nous that determined the outcome on Saturday, as Rangers threatened to become only the third team this season to beat his side in a league match.

Reid had left out Michael Bridges to accommodate the return from injury of Kevin Phillips and the decision looked to have been a good one when Phillips volleyed Sunderland into the lead after 32 minutes. Yet when Danny Maddix headed an equaliser for Rangers and Kevin Ball, the Sunderland captain, was dismissed for a late tackle just before the interval, Reid's men were up against it.

Rangers' second goal, Kevin Gallen finishing off good work from Kiwomya and Dowie from close range six minutes after half-time, might have demoralised lesser teams, but, instead, Sunderland continued to push forward. With 17 minutes remaining and Rangers using their man advantage to soak up pressure, Reid reintroduced Bridges, who unnerved the home defence on several occasions before his stoppage-time cross found Niall Quinn at the far post to head the equaliser.

"He [Bridges] goes past players, something that in the modern game gets defenders on the back foot," Reid said, admitting also that leaving Bridges out had been "a massive decision".

Gerry Francis, the Rangers manager, noted that the forward riches available to Reid give him an advantage over most opponents, but he also found plenty to enthuse over in his own team's performance. "There's no doubt that Sunderland are by far the best side in the division," he said. "Two or three months ago, if we'd gone behind to a side like Sunderland, we'd have folded, but we matched them."

The result gives Sunderland a nine-point lead at the top of the first division in advance of the visit next Sunday of Ipswich Town to the Stadium of Light. "Not a bad one, next week," Reid said, "but we'll be up for it." Sounds like team spirit.

QUEENS PARK RANGERS (3-4-3): L Miklosko — K Ready, S Morrow, D Maddix — A Heinola, M Rose, G Peacock, I Baraclough — C Kiwomya, I Dowie, K Gallen.
SUNDERLAND (4-4-2): T Sorensen — D Williams (sub: M Smith, 73min), A Melville, P Butler, C Makin — A Rae, L Clark, K Ball, G McCann (sub: M Bridges, 73min) — K Phillips, N Quinn.
Referee: S Mathieson.

Walsall in distinguished company

Walsall 2
Gillingham...........................1

By Bill Edgar

A GLANCE at the top of the Nationwide League second division can provoke nostalgia and an assumption that pedigree will be rewarded by promotion. Yet while Walsall lacked the history of some of their rivals, a bright future awaits if they maintain the spirit that has lifted them unexpectedly to second place.

Since taking charge of a team that just avoided relegation to the third division last season, Ray Graydon, the Walsall manager, has found support throughout this small club as it battles against Fulham, Stoke City, Preston North End and Manchester City, among others. "Everybody here is pulling the same way, from the physio to the lady that makes the tea. It's so important," Graydon said.

"Matt Busby said that everybody needs to be pulling together for a club to have lasting success."

The effects of factions pulling in opposite directions can be seen seven places and 13 points below Walsall, where Manchester City are still reeling from years of infighting.

City are the next visitors to Bescot Stadium 12 days from now and they will encounter a Walsall team with grit and determination but able to pass fluently on a bumpy home pitch.

Walsall displayed all their qualities in halting Gillingham's 17-match unbeaten league run, notably in a frantic final ten minutes, when the visitors were denied an equaliser by two double-saves from Walker, the home goalkeeper. He had been beaten by a fine 69th-minute header from Patterson, but, by then, Walsall had already built a 2-0 lead through a tap-in by Rack and a header from Rammell.

Walsall's ability to protect what their limited means have produced is indicated by the fact that all but three of their 15 league wins have been by one goal. If they reach the domestic game's second flight for only the fourth time this century, they could meet Wolverhampton Wanderers, Birmingham City and West Bromwich Albion, their bigger West Midland cousins — and perhaps show them the value of family spirit.

WALSALL (4-4-2): J Walker - W Evans, I Roper, A Viveash, C Marsh - D Rack, B Larusson, D Keates, P Simpson - A Watson (sub: W Thomas, 79min), A Rammell.
GILLINGHAM (3-5-2): V Bartram - B Ashby, A Pennock, G Butters - N Southall, A Hessenthaler (sub: J Hodge, 46), P Smith, M Galloway (sub: M Saunders, 64 mins), M Patterson - R Taylor, C Asaba.
Referee: E Lomas.

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP

ARSENAL (0) 0 **LIVERPOOL** (0) 0
38,107

Arsenal: A Manninger, L Dixon, M Keown, S Bould (sub: M Upson 32min), D Grondin, R Parlour, P Vieira, E Petit, M Overmars (sub: R Garde 84), L Boa Morte, N Anelka (sub: C Wreh 87).

Booked: Bould, Keown.

Liverpool: D James, J Carragher, P Babb, S Staunton (sub: D Matteo 62), V Heggem, P Berger, P Ince, J Redknapp, S Harkness, R Fowler, M Owen (sub: K Riedle 88).

Booked: Babb, Ince, Redknapp. **Referee:** G Barber.

BLACKBURN (1) 1 **LEEDS** (0) 0
Gillespie 22 27,620
Sent off: T Sherwood (Blackburn Rovers) 25

Blackburn Rovers: J Filan, J Kenna, C Davidson, T Sherwood, S Henchoz, J Wilcox, D Duff (sub: D Dunn 26min), M Broomes, W McKinlay, K Gillespie, A Ward.

Booked: Sherwood, Wilcox, Filan.

Leeds: N Martyn, A I Haaland, D Wetherall, J F Hasselbaink, B Ribeiro (sub: S McPhail 74), L Bowyer, D Hopkin, D Granville, G Halle, H Kewell, J Woodgate (sub: A Smith 45).

Booked: Bowyer, Haaland, Wetherall. **Referee:** R Harris.

COVENTRY (1) 4 **NOTTM FOREST** (0) 0
Huckerby 45, 46, 75 17,172
Telfer 54

Coventry City: M Hedman, R Nilsson, D Burrows (sub: S Shilton 72min), P Williams, R Shaw, N Whelan, G McAllister (sub: B Quinn 87), P Telfer, T E Soltvedt, D Huckerby, J Aloisi (sub: D Jackson 68).

Booked: Whelan, Telfer, McAllister

Nottingham Forest: D Beasant, S Chettle, J Hjelde, C Armstrong (sub: D Freedman 56), D Lyttle, S Stone, S Gemmill (sub: N Doastle 83), A Johnson, C Bart-Williams (sub: I Woan 70), C Doig, P van Hooijdonk.

Booked: Chettle, Woan. **Referee:** P Jones.

EVERTON (0) 0 **LEICESTER** (0) 0
32,792

Everton: T Myhre, A Cleland, R Dunne, D Watson, D Unsworth, M Ball, D Hutchison, O Dacourt, J Oster, D Cadamarteri (sub: N Barmby 75min), I Bakayoko.

Booked: Dacourt.

Leicester City: K Keller, F Sinclair, M Elliott, S Walsh, R Ullathorne, M Izzet, N Lennon, A Impey, S Guppy, E Heskey, A Cottee.

Booked: Sinclair.

Referee: P Durkin.

MIDDLESBROUGH (0) 0 **ASTON VILLA** (0) 0
34,643

Middlesbrough: M Schwarzer, C Fleming, G Festa, C Cooper, G Pallister, D Gordon, N Maddison, A Townsend, P Gascoigne, H Ricard (sub: M Beck 84min), B Deane.

Booked: Gascoigne, Ricard, Fleming.

Aston Villa: M Oakes, S Watson, U Ehiogu, G Southgate, G Barry, A Wright, R Scimeca (sub: S Grayson 77), I Taylor, L Hendrie, D Dublin, J Joachim.

Booked: Barry.

Referee: U Rennie.

NEWCASTLE (0) 0 **CHELSEA** (1) 1
36,711 Petrescu 39

Newcastle United: S Given, D Domi, S Howey, G Speed, D Hamann, L Charvet, S Glass, N Solano (sub: R Lee 72min), A Hughes, A Andersson (sub: L Saha 57), A Shearer.

Booked: Hughes.

Chelsea: E De Goey, D Petrescu, A Ferrer, F Leboeuf, M Duberry, G Le Saux, M Desailly, D Wise, R Di Matteo, G Zola (sub: M Nicholls 88), G Vialli.

Booked: Le Saux, Desailly, Ferrer.

Referee: D Gallagher.

SHEFFIELD WED (0) 0 **TOTTENHAM** (0) 0
28,204

Sheffield Wednesday: P Srnicek, P Atherton, E Thome, D Walker, D Stefanovic, A Hinchcliffe, N Alexandersson, W Jonk, P Rudi, R Humphreys, B Carbone.

Booked: Carbone.

Tottenham Hotspur: I Walker, S Carr, L Young, S Campbell, A Sinton, D Anderton (sub: S Clemence 27min), S Freund, A Nielsen, D Ginola (sub: J Edinburgh 67), S Iversen, L Ferdinand (sub: C Armstrong 9).

Booked: Freund, Nielsen.

Referee: G Willard.

SOUTHAMPTON (1) 3 **CHARLTON** (1) 1
Kachloul 8 Hunt 13
Colleter 52 15,222
Beattie 89

Southampton: P Jones, J Dodd, P Colleter, C Palmer, K Monkou, C Lundekvam, M Hughes, M Oakley, E Ostenstad, J Beattie, H Kachloul.

Booked: Beattie, M Hughes.

Charlton Athletic: S Ilic, D Mills, C Powell, N Redfearn, R Rufus, E Youds, M Kinsella, S Newton, J Robinson, A Hunt, S Jones (sub: M Pringle 71min).

Booked: Mills, Youds, Hunt.

Referee: G Poll.

WIMBLEDON (1) 2 **DERBY** (0) 1
Euell 8 Wanchope 76
Roberts 83 12,732

Wimbledon: N Sullivan, A Kimble, C Perry, D Blackwell, B Thatcher, C Hughes (sub: E Ekoku 80min), A Roberts, M Gayle, M Hughes (sub: M Kennedy 88), J Euell, C Cort (sub: C Leaburn 73).

Booked: C Hughes, Perry.

Derby County: M Poom, H Carbonari, D Powell (sub: D Burton 88), A Dorigo, D Sturridge, P Wanchope, J Laursen, S Prior, L Carsley, S Elliott (sub: K Harper 86), S Eranio (sub: L Bohinen 66)

Booked: Dorigo, Harper.

Referee: A Wilkie.

Yesterday

MAN UTD (2) 4 **WEST HAM** (0) 1
Yorke 10, Cole 40, 67 Lampard 89
Solskjaer 80 55,180

Manchester Utd: R Van Der Gouw, D Irwin, H Berg, W Brown (sub: R Johnsen 77min), J Blomqvist, R Keane (sub: J Cruyff 84), N Butt (sub: O G Solskjaer 77), D Yorke, A Cole, J Stam, R Giggs.

West Ham: S Hislop, R Ferdinand, N Ruddock, I Pearce, S Potts, S Lazaridis, F Lampard, E Berkovic, T Sinclair (sub: J Cole 45), S Lomas, J Hartson.

Booked: Sinclair. **Referee:** M Reed.

OVERSEAS

NATIONAL

SCOTLAND

TENNENTS CUP SECOND RND

QUEEN OF SOUTH (0) 1 **ROSS COUNTY** (3) 3
Nesovic 88 Tarrant 30, 37, 39 (pen)
1,194

SECOND ROUND REPLAYS

FIRST DIVISION

SECOND DIVISION

THIRD DIVISION

CONFERENCE

GOALSCORERS

Nationwide Football League

FIRST DIVISION

BIRMINGHAM (1) 1 **PORT VALE** (0) 0
Furlong 25 18,632

CREWE (0) 3 **NORWICH** (2) 2
Street 82, 90 Llewellyn 10
Rivers 57 Marshall 33
4,762

HUDDERSFIELD (1) 2 **BURY** (0) 2
Allison 32 West 82
Johnson 63 Johnrose 84
10,788

IPSWICH (0) 0 **GRIMSBY** (1) 1
15,575 Handyside 14

OXFORD UTD (0) 0 **BRISTOL CITY** (0) 0
9,434

QPR (1) 2 **SUNDERLAND** (1) 2
Maddix 43 Phillips 32
Gallen 51 Quinn 90
17,444
Sent off: K Ball (Sunderland) 45

STOCKPORT (0) 1 **BRADFORD** (1) 2
Angell 61 Blake 9
8,975 Beagrie 72

SWINDON (1) 2 **SHEFFIELD UTD** (1) 2
Ndah 10 Stuart 44
Onuora 47 Holdsworth 88
7,583
Sent off: B Borrows (Swindon) 43

WATFORD (0) 0 **PORTSMOUTH** (0) 0
12,057

WEST BROM (0) 2 **BARNSLEY** (0) 0
Murphy 66 15,029
Hughes 69

FRIDAY'S LATE RESULT: Tranmere 1 Wolverhampton 2.

Yesterday

SECOND DIVISION

THIRD DIVISION

Nicky Rizzo, left, of Crystal Palace, tries to shrug off the challenge of Neil Cox, of Bolton, during his side's 3-0 defeat in the Nationwide League first division yesterday. Match report, page 31. Photograph: Mark Thompson/Allsport

NON-LEAGUE

UNIBOND

PREMIER DIVISION: Bamber Bridge 2 Bishop Auckland 2; Blyth Spartans 4 Colwyn Bay 4; Chorley 1 Emley 1; Frickley 0 Leigh RMI 2; Gateshead 7 Lancaster 1; Guiseley 4 Accrington Stanley 0; Hyde 0 Altrincham 1; Marine 2 Stalybridge 2; Runcorn 2 Whitby 3; Worksop 1 Winsford 0. Postponed: Spennymoor v Gainsborough.

RYMAN

PREMIER DIVISION: Basingstoke 2 Heybridge 2; Bishop's Stortford 0 Harrow 3; Bromley 2 Carshalton 3; Chesham 1 Slough 0; Gravesend 2 Aldershot 1; Hampton 1 St Albans 2; Purfleet 4 Hendon 0; Walton and Hersham 1 Boreham Wood 1. Postponed: Aylesbury v Enfield; Dag and Red v Dulwich; Sutton v Billericay.

FA CARLSBERG VASE

FOURTH ROUND: Ash 1 Tiverton 5; Bedford Town 3 Wroxham 1; Bedlington Ter 7 Banstead Ath 3; Camberley 0 Tooting and M 0; Ford Utd 4 Kidsgrove Ath 2; Goole 0 Bemerton Heath 1; Harlow 1 Taunton 2; Lymington & New Milton 0 Mossley 0; Oldbury 0 Workington 4; St Blazey 1 Dunston FB 5; Sudbury Tn 0 Northwood 0; Warrington

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Backwell 1 Bridport 0; Barnstaple 1 Odd Down 1; Calne 2 Keynsham 3; Mangotsfield 2 Paulton 4; Melksham 3 Bideford 1; Westbury 0 Brislington 0. Postponed: Bristol Manor Farm v Bridgewater; Elmore v Chippenham; Yeovil TR v Bishop Sutton.

SOUTHERN AMATEUR LEAGUE: Alleyn Old Boys 4 Broomfield 1; Bank Of

VERNONS LOTTERY FOOTBALL GAME

POOLS CHECK

CARLING F.A. PREMIERSHIP

	HOME						AWAY						Goal
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	diff
1 Chelsea	21	6	4	0	15	5	4	6	1	17	12	40	+15
2 Aston Villa	21	7	2	1	19	12	4	5	2	12	8	40	+11
3 Man Utd	21	8	3	1	31	13	2	5	2	12	11	38	+19
4 Arsenal	21	6	5	0	15	4	3	4	3	7	7	36	+11
5 Leeds	21	6	3	1	18	5	2	6	3	16	15	33	+14
6 Wimbledon	21	7	3	1	18	11	2	3	5	11	22	33	-4
7 Liverpool	21	5	3	2	21	12	4	2	5	15	13	32	+11
8 West Ham	21	6	3	1	16	10	3	2	6	9	17	32	-2
9 Middlesbro	21	4	6	1	16	10	3	4	3	16	16	31	+6
10 Leicester	21	5	3	2	15	10	2	5	4	6	11	29	+2
11 Derby	21	3	6	2	10	9	3	5	3	11	11	28	+1
12 Tottenham	21	5	3	2	19	16	2	4	5	9	14	28	-2
13 Newcastle	21	5	2	4	14	14	1	4	5	10	15	24	-5
14 Everton	21	2	7	2	3	5	3	2	5	10	16	24	-8
15 Sheff Wed	21	5	3	3	13	6	1	2	7	8	16	23	-1
16 Blackburn	21	5	2	4	13	11	0	4	6	8	17	21	-7
17 Coventry	21	4	4	3	15	12	1	1	8	5	17	20	-9
18 Southamptn	21	3	2	6	15	21	1	3	6	4	18	17	-20
19 Charlton	21	2	3	4	13	10	1	4	7	11	24	16	-10
20 Nottm F	21	1	6	3	9	12	1	1	9	9	28	13	-22

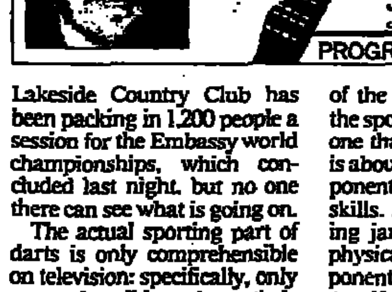
Nationwide FOOTBALL LEAGUE

SCOTLAND



BBC hit the bull's eye with two scribbling ladies





SIMON BARNES

PROGRAMME NOTES

There was a pleasant bar at the main Press Centre at the Olympic Games in Atlanta. By one of those rum quirks of faith, you only found British journalists inside it. Occasionally, we remarked on this. "The British are not the only drinking journalists," one of our number said. "Somewhere very near here there is a bar being drank dry by the Dutch."

It is not the tradition of alcohol that is unique, because an awful lot of nations do that. It is the tradition of standing up drinking beer and, as Eric Bristow himself so rightly pointed out, you can take darts out of the pub, but you can never take the pub out of darts. Which meant that it was inevitable that, in time, the British hegemony in the world of darts would be ceded to the Dutch.

Ray Barneveld is not exactly an exoticism. He would not stand out in any pub in Britain: just another suety man valiantly not pretending that he isn't going bald. He looks to be no stranger to his country's best-known export, the one that comes in green tins.

Various sports have what you might call the "world series syndrome", a world championship fought for by a single nation. In this country, the world championships of snooker and darts are seldom contested, still less won, by any non-Brit. But now we have Barney and his followers: one whiff of a Dutch success anywhere in the world, and the television screen turns bright orange.

There is generally an air of great good humour and festival when the Dutch have a decent sporting run on their hands and descend upon it in numbers. Besides, the Dutch and the Brits have always rather got on. This is not true of the Brits and the French — I suspect it is because the French insist on doing their drinking sitting down. It will be a while before we have a French world champion at darts.

Rum thing, darts. There are plenty of sports in which television gives you a better view, but with darts, television gives you the only view. True, the Lakeside Country Club has been packing in 1,200 people a session for the Embassy world championships, which concluded last night, but no one there can see what is going on.

The actual sporting part of darts is only comprehensible on television: specifically, only comprehensible in their unique, split-screen master-shot, with the relevant area of board on one side and the face of the player on the other. If the sport has a fascination, it is one that it shares with golf. It is about the influence of the opponent on a player's closed skills. A closed skill, in sporting jargon, is a skill that — physically, anyway — your opponent cannot interfere with. A golf shot: a dart throw: a triple-salchow: a clear round: sport is full of examples of closed skills. In golf, in darts, in skating, in showjumping, opponents are not allowed to tackle, but they can affect the opposition with their poise, their presence, their performance. That is how darts works: the excellence of one player will force another into error, or, sometimes, into greater excellence. A 140 is followed by an embarrassing 41 — or by a 180.

But the BBC television coverage has lost all faith with the actual action. Cut-aways rule. There are more cut-aways than action shots: fans cheering, fans looking disappointed, fans drinking. And, especially, the cameras home in on the harrowed faces of tortured and traumatised women. These are the wives of the players: in agony, not just because they married a darts player — a tough enough break, in all conscience — but also because their man is now up there pinging in the 180s. Or not, of course.

One of the semi-finals had that important aspect of any darts tournament: a really quite incredibly fat person. This was Andy "The Viking" Fordham: a beard, long hair and an unfortunate upward-looking camera angle that made the most of his over-stated mammary development.

Fordham moves with the delicate, finicky grace you often find in the truly obese. And then a cut-away to The Viking's mum, in anguish as her little lad lost the plot. And then — my favourite this — a cut-away to two middle-aged ladies in glasses, wearing identical blue waistcoats and scribbling furiously with identical pencils.

Who were they? Were they adding up the bar takings? Playing bingo, or battle ships? Composing music, or poetry? I adore the fact that the camera turned to them at least half-a-dozen times in two hours of television and each time the ladies were doing exactly the same thing — scribbling away and looking through their glasses — and no one ever mentioned them, still less, explained them. Darts is an area of life that is not exactly chock full of mystery: it was good television to make good that lack.

Houllier's men spook mischievous souls who turned up for a laugh at their expense

Defenders of the faith spoil the fun



LYNNE TRUSS

Given the number of times that I've seen Liverpool's defenders picked out for special mournful attention by Alan Hansen on *Match of the Day*, it was quite a strange experience watching them play on Saturday at Highbury. How odd that in real life Phil Babb, Steve Staunton and Jamie Carragher are not (every ten seconds or so) freeze-framed hopelessly out of position and circled in white.

It was a cruel disappointment. Sometimes you go to football in mischievous spirit: you want to see for yourself just how bad the Liverpool defence is. You want to have a fine old laugh at David James. So, when the whole visiting team play as a defensive wall — locking hands across the pitch and performing the football equivalent of the cygnet dance in *Swan Lake* — I have to say it removes a substantial slice of the pleasure.

Still, football support is all about observing trends and remaking the story of what's going on. The strengths and weaknesses of Liverpool were sufficiently well-known to be rather boring, after all; on Saturday, Gérard Houllier certainly made his team the talking point, by doing something supremely out of the ordinary, to lay the ghost of Roy Evans. A defensive triumph, plus Paul Ince wasn't sent off and Michael Owen didn't score. It was spooky.

Meanwhile, Arsène Wenger's team performed more or less as you would predict. Despite the substitutions caused by injury, Arsenal's roundhead defence was solid and strong; its cavalier midfield was thrusting, curly-haired and inventive; and its pathetic forwards feebly wrote poetry with big feathers while coughing blood into a hankie.





PAUL HACKETT

Halo, Halo: the boys in bubbles were noticeably absent on Saturday night, so, for those who missed them, here are Harkness and Heggem in more familiar guises

Same old, same old, as you might say. Take Marc Overmars. He raced about tirelessly and devotedly, doing the work of five men; a loosened bandage flapped unregarded at his injured knee. And why? Because he can't play any other way. He sprints, turns, sprints, beats a defender, turns, sprints towards the corner. Does his tongue really hang out like a sheepdog's, or do I imagine it? One thing is sure: if Overmars were a real sheepdog, he'd be the worthy star of a series of animal-hero movies. They could call him Dutch. Sprint, turn, race, woof.

"Fetch the dynamite out of the mine-shaft, Dutch!" they'd say, and off he'd go at breakneck speed. You can just see him. His legs a blur, he circles back to collect a baby from a blazing shack, emerging singed around the ears. Woof, woof. Well done, Dutch! Here's a bone. Music swells. (The end).

But, as I mentioned, Arsenal's story isn't changing much at the moment. There is a regular trickle of success, but the triumph is mainly empty of pride, because something Dennis-shaped is missing. Every few weeks, Dennis Bergkamp appears to be fit and able to play — and then it turns out that he isn't; or wasn't; or isn't now, anyway. Hopes rise cautiously, level out for a bit, falter, and then sink again. One wonders how long a player known for changing the course of games can sustain such a reputation without actually playing. Meanwhile, Nicolas Anelka, Luis Boa Morte and Christopher Wreh faff about aimlessly in a kind of limbo, taking it in turns to strike comically wide of goal, as if there's no point trying until Dennis's Second Coming.

So Arsenal dominated on Saturday, but couldn't score. Meanwhile, Liverpool huddled together at the back (attractive in yellow), and occasionally shot the ball forward, over everybody's heads, to Owen, who couldn't score either.

Owen's best chance required him to use a left foot (which he doesn't have). It's a well-known fact, apparently, that when Owen's little face clouds over with concentration as he rockets towards goal at St Etienne, scattering Argentinian defenders like skittles, he is not asking himself: "Mmm, which foot shall I use?" as I always supposed. When it boils down to it, amazingly, he's only got the one.

> 'Tension usually is between volatile, stupid people'

How could such a frustrating afternoon be made worse for a sensation-seeker? Well, interestingly, by two French coaches good-naturedly patting each other on the back at the press conference and rehearsing an array of affirmative abstract nouns. I don't know why this was so annoying, but it was.

Liverpool's composure, character and discipline in defence were admired by both men: strength, solidity, blah, blah, blah, composure, discipline. Houllier declared that he didn't mind a bit of tension between his players, as it was a sign of "mental toughness". Which is nonsense, of course, since tension (ie, fighting) usually arises between people who are volatile and stupid. But you somehow cannot deny that "tension is a sign of mental toughness" sounds quite philosophical when delivered in a cultured French accent with a complacent smile.

Meanwhile, Wenger was not only supportive of Houllier but determinedly uncritical of Liverpool's niggardly performance. "We cannot ask our opponents to play a certain way," he shrugged. "I don't want to judge what other teams do. They set you a problem and you must solve it. I have to respect what they did." Having enough antagonism on his plate at the moment, perhaps Wenger was simply being prudent in not stirring more controversy.

Will they remain chums? If one may borrow an outmoded argot from Popeye Doyle in *The French Connection*, having been Frog One for so long in English football, how does it feel for Wenger to face the possible threat of demotion to Frog Two? Houllier is not only turning his team round, but is personable and clever. He is evidently the academic type we, at first, mistook Wenger for. He has a twinkly eye and says interesting, epigrammatic things like: "Sometimes a shower is beneficial." At the risk of a pun, Arsène, is this galling?

Meanwhile, spare a thought for the production team at *Match of the Day*, left with a batch of unused Liverpool-defender circles. "You'll be wanting these, Alan?" they said, handing them over and counting them out. "One for Staunton, four for Babb . . ."

"Not today, boys," was the baffling, brusque Scottish reply. What to do with a dozen redundant graphics? Cheerful types, doubtless they wore them on their heads as halos. They played hoop-la in the canteen. They juggled four at a time. But it must have been hard to forget that something strange had happened. The boys in the bubbles had escaped their destiny at last.

SPORTS LETTERS

Sports letters may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5211. They should include a daytime telephone number.

e-mail, including a postal address and daytime telephone number, should be sent to: sport.letters@the-times.co.uk

Clubs should punish cheats

From Mr W. A. Watson

Sir, Arsène Wenger complains (report, January 1) about the "divers and cheats" and adds his name to the weekly list of managers who continue to berate referees. The standard of refereeing is probably at a low ebb and Wenger, Ferguson, Strachan *et al* are both correct and justified in bemoaning the level of cheating that is entering the game as never before.

They are wrong, however, in blaming the hapless referee. It is not the referees who are cheating but the players. The individual managers are in charge of the team and it is therefore surely reasonable to expect the buck to rest on the manager's desk.

Instead of complaining about opposing players and referees week after week, it is time that these highly-paid apologists and complainers did their job properly. If they are so concerned about cheating, will they discipline their own guilty players? I suspect not, but I put this proposition forward as an open letter to all league managers (Premiership or otherwise) to have the courage to go into print and confirm that they will take action against their own players in this way.

If there are no takers to my invitation, I must pose the simple question — why?

Yours faithfully,
W. A. WATSON,
22 Ashby Road, Kegworth,
Derby DE74 2DH.

From Mr Ian Todd

Sir, Arsène Wenger is right to decry cheating by players, but there is a simpler, if less likely, way of curbing this than asking the FA Premier League to view a video of every game.

The message that Wenger preaches would be more effectively delivered by his own brethren. There is no reason why Alan Curbishley should not impose an equivalent internal discipline by dropping Redfearn for the next game. Similarly, Vialli might drop Leboeuf in their joint acknowledgement that he was lucky to escape a red card. The Corinthian ethos will be more telling if delivered by the player's own employer than some neutral third party.

In contrast, Wenger is wrong in his defence of Vieira. Surely the point of impact is irrelevant. The critical factor is the use and manner of delivery of the elbow.

Yours faithfully,
IAN TODD,
Chairman, Supporters' Clubs Federation,
8 Wyke Close,
Isleworth TW7 5PE.

Need to support Britain's young athletes

From Mr Nic Gault

Sir, It was a real new year tonic to read David Powell's piece on the excellent work of the Ron Pickering Memorial Fund in supporting young athletes (Champions who benefit in the long run, January 4). However, more support of this kind is needed urgently if we are going to continue to produce world-beating athletes, especially in the build-up to the Sydney Olympic Games next year.

Barclaycard research into the funding of British sportspeople revealed that athletes receive just half of the funding that they actually need to compete successfully with their international rivals and that three out of five athletes believe that this hinders their sporting performance and potential. It was information such as this that led to us to set up Barclaycard Team 2000 in conjunction with SportsAid, the country's leading sports charity. We support a hundred of Britain's best young sportspeople with all-round grants of up to £20,000 each to help with their training.

British athletes deserve our nation's encouragement — financially as well as from the grandstand.

Yours faithfully,
NIC GAULT,
Head of Sponsorship, Barclaycard,
1234 Pavilion Drive, Northampton NN4 7SG.

Cynical fouls

From Mr Jeffrey Morgan

Sir, In football the sending-off is supposed to be the ultimate deterrent to the cynical professional foul, but, on the evidence of recent years, it is obviously not having the desired effect.

Statistical analysis of the games in which a player has been sent off shows that playing with only ten men is not a great disadvantage. It may hinder the attacking play of the penalised side, but it does not, for a variety of reasons, make it much easier for the full-strength side to score.

Defensive players, when deciding whether or not to bring down an attacking player, are simply playing the percentages. If a striker is running clear on goal, the defender will always bring him down if he can, even if it means being sent off. The defender is sensibly calculating that stopping an almost certain goal is worth the penalty of reducing his own team to ten men, because playing with ten men is not nearly as damaging as conceding a goal.

In my opinion, the only remedy is to change the rules so that whenever a player is sent off, a penalty goal is also awarded, regardless of where on the pitch the foul is committed.

Draconian it may be, but the professional foul would virtually be eliminated at a stroke of the rulebook pen!

Yours sincerely,
JEFFREY MORGAN,
Hollyhurst,
Church Street,
Hampton Lucy CV35 8BE.

Minority sports

From Mr A. Copley

Sir, I fly radio control and free flight electric model aeroplanes and am not sure that David Powell is correct in stating (December 31) that these minority sports deserve a wider acclaim. One of the advantages and pleasures is the limited general coverage. There are plenty of monthly magazines, clubs, shows throughout the country and exhibition flying displays without the build-up on the sports pages.

That television does not interest itself in these minority sports is part of their charm.

Yours sincerely,
A. COPLEY,
2, Main Street,
Hutton Cranswick,
Driffield YO25 9QR.

Iniquity of cricket toss

From Mr Michael Joseph

Sir, I have read that the counties are proposing a change in the toss so that the visiting side has the choice in order to compensate for home ground knowledge and advantage.

Cricket is a game of complex skills and it seems inequitable that, in a Test series, the toss should play such a significant part. If tossing a coin does involve a special skill, it would be useful if it was introduced without delay into our captain's training manual.

Why cannot the rules be changed so that the toss is effective for the first game in a series of, say, five matches and then the choice alternates, with a further toss for the fifth game?

I appreciate that the winning of the toss is not an automatic step to success and weather vagaries can upset the best calculations, but at least the heavy element of luck that exists at present would be largely eliminated.

Yours sincerely,
M. S. JOSEPH,
33 York Terrace West,
NW1 4QA.

Ashes strategy

From Mr R.N.G. Stone

Sir, Though the other proposals likely to be debated by the International Cricket Council last week are to be resisted, there is one (report, January 2) that sounds most attractive: apparently, the Asian bloc will propose "a retrospective life ban on Shane Warne and Mark Waugh".

I cannot imagine what this would mean, but if it entails that all Warne's wickets and all Waugh's runs in their careers to date are to be discounted, and the results of the Tests in which they played adjusted accordingly, then by next week England will be in possession of the Ashes. How can Lord MacLaurin of Knebworth possibly vote against?

Yours faithfully,
R.N.G. STONE,
92, Foxwell Street,
Worcester,
WR5 2ET.

This week in THE TIMES



Tomorrow: After their winning start against Australia yesterday, England's one-day cricketers take on Sri Lanka, the world champions.

Wednesday: FA Cup third-round replays — can Kevin Keegan's expensive army defeat Southampton at Craven Cottage?

Thursday: Golf's European Tour begins — where else? — in Cape Town. John Hopkins on the 1st tee looks ahead to the coming season.

Football Saturday: Match by match previews of the Premiership, plus football's finest team of columnists — Frank Leboeuf on life at the top of the league, Danny Baker, Robert Elms and Alyson Rudd.

Tetley's Bitter Cup: Fading West Country giants both succumb in fourth round

Bath drained by accuracy of Wilkinson

Newcastle Falcons............25
Bath.................................22

By Mark Souster

SOME cried, others shook their heads in disbelief, the remainder sat, heads bowed, in stunned silence. After the cruel manner of their last-minute defeat by Newcastle Falcons, Andy Robinson admitted that the Bath dressing-room resembled a morgue. The league was already a mirage, now the *Tetley's Bitter Cup*, the knockout competition that they had won ten times, was out of reach. The club that for years had been weaned on nothing but a diet of success had had the life squeezed out of it.

Yet it is no disgrace to lose at Kingston Park. No one has won there in the cup for two years, nor in the league for three. The fact that they came so close indicates that Bath's decline is not terminal. At the press conference, Robinson went through his now customary defence of his position and spoke positively about the future.

"We have been slagged off because of the lack of team spirit, which is a complete joke," Robinson, the Bath coach, said. "There is a lot of pride at this club. We lost a game we should have won and we won't be in the draw on Monday morning. That is bitterly disappointing."

While Bath's fortunes have been well-chronicled, do not forget that Newcastle, too, have had problems. Rob Andrew has had to contend with turmoil behind the scenes and the departure of key personnel, while also developing a more varied playing style. Critics have been quick to forget what has already been achieved. Newcastle have an exciting crop of talented individuals emerging from their under-21 development squad, among them Jimmy Cartmell and Ross Beattie in the back row, proving that there is life after Dean Ryan and Pat Lam. It was Beattie's charge through a static Bath defence ten minutes from time for a converted try that brought Newcastle level.

Bath needed a wise head to guide them, but no one took responsibility. In contrast, they were mugged by the most talented teenager of them all. Much has been written and said about the ability of Jonny Wilkinson since he burst into the England side last March, only, like many others, to suffer from the fall-out of the disastrous summer. Chastened, but never doubting his own ability, he returned to Newcastle to regroup, out of the limelight. On Saturday he kicked 20 points, from six sweetly-struck penalty goals and a conversion — the final penalty soaring over in the 79th minute after Ben Sturnham had been adjudged, harshly, to have impeded Beattie.


Wilkinson kicks the winning penalty

Andrew has little doubt that Wilkinson's future lies as the England fly half. "We all expect that. The sky is the limit as far as Jonny is concerned. The bottom line at the top level is whether a guy can handle it mentally. He can: he wants to do the goal-kicking." Not one of his penalty goals was from less than 35 metres, not one looked like missing. The three most important came in a ten-minute period after half-time when Newcastle needed momentum.

It was hard to believe that Newcastle were actually so far adrift at half-time. In the opening ten minutes, Tuigamala could have scored two tries and Marius Hurter was denied a try because of a double movement. Yet Bath retaliated with three tries. The first was a perfectly-executed driven maul from a lineout 20 metres out, the second made by the vision of Cooper at scrum half, whose speed and length of pass give Mike Catt priceless breathing space. After half an hour, he was denied a try only by Walton's timely intervention after a break and chip down the blindside.

Five minutes after a charge by Lyle and Webster, Cooper switched direction at a ruck and Catt burst over. The third try bordered on the comical. Armstrong's attempted clearance was charged down, Guscott forced Andrew to knock on and Earnshaw touched down. That Newcastle were able to haul themselves back says much for their resilience and self-belief.

SCORERS: Newcastle Falcons: Try: Beattie (71min). Conversion: Wilkinson. Penalty goals: Wilkinson 6 (15, 28, 42, 44, 52, 78). Bath: Tries: Webster (17), Catt (35), Earnshaw (40). Conversions: Catt 2. Penalty goal: Catt (31).
SCORING SEQUENCE (Newcastle first): 3-0, 3-5, 6-5, 6-8, 6-15, 6-22 (half-time), 9-22, 12-22, 15-22, 22-22, 25-22.
NEWCASTLE FALCONS: S Legg; J Naylor, M Shaw, R Andrew, V Tuigamala; J Wilkinson, G Armstrong; G Graham, R Nesdale, M Hurter, G Archer, G Weir, P Walton, J Cartmell, R Beattie.
BATH: M Perry (rep: I Evans, 52min); I Balshaw, K Maggs, J Guscott, A Adebayo; M Catt, G Cooper; D Hilton (rep: K Yates, 64), M Regan, V Ubogu, M Haag, S Borthwick, R Earnshaw, R Webster (rep: B Sturnham, 50), D Lyle.
Referee: A Rowden (Berkshire).


Gallacher, the London Irish forward, hands off Baber as he launches another attack in yesterday's easy win at Bristol

Irish exploit huge gap in class

Bristol 19
London Irish........................43

By David Hands
Rugby Correspondent

THIS has been a good weekend for the Irish, although, at a freezing Memorial Stadium yesterday, there were few sons of Erin present. However, the London exiles (southern-hemisphere branch) emerged from a demanding week with three valued scalps under their belts, the latest of them carrying them through to today's fifth-round draw of the *Tetley's Bitter Cup*.

Within eight days, London Irish have brought down Newcastle and Northampton, in the Allied Dunbar Premiership, and now the leaders of the second division, for whom the fourth round of the cup was an exercise in the art of the possible. They met the in-form club of the first division before a crowd of 6,200, their best of the season, and were comprehensively defeated, though the politics and business ethics now at work in English rugby place a query over Bristol's status a week from now.

Nick de Scossa, the Bristol chief executive, was adamant that a challenge will be mounted within days to the perceived plans of the leading English clubs, should they bar promotion from the second division. They are prepared to buy a 100 per cent holding in a first division club — Tony Tiarks, the chairman of London Scottish, who have been linked with the deal, was at the ground — and De Scossa said that there were three clubs interested in buying Bristol's assets.

"None of the assurances we have had from the Rugby Football Union [RFU] or English First Division Rugby have been anything we feel we can trust," he said. "I can't run a business with liabilities of £2 million a year. It's unrealistic and it's about time people understood that." Bristol are prepared to merge the playing assets of two companies — their own and their putative purchase — to ensure a place at the top table and they defy the RFU to stop them.

All of which made the afternoon's competition seem stillborn, which, until the second half, it was. The Irish, playing a brand of rugby that made Bristol look leaden-footed, were 29 points to the good before their hosts nibbled their way on to the scoreboard. Not until the final quarter did the Irish relax their efforts.

At times, Dick Best's players made the game resemble a training exercise, so easy was their movement of the ball. The Bristol defence was opened up time and again by the variety of the midfield passing and the perceptive entries into the line of Conor O'Shea. The Irish might have doubled their first-half tally of four tries but for desperate last-ditch tackling from Bristol.

The combination of O'Shea and Woods baffled Bristol utterly, the pair sharing the first two tries before Bachop's brilliant flat pass sent Venter to the line. A more prosaic score followed when his pack shunted Kirke over, and they did the same for Boer to open the second half. At that stage, Bristol's southern-hemisphere contingent, which amounted to nine, looked distinctly cut-price compared with the Irish octet, but they stuck to it and shared the spoils in the second half.

SCORERS: Bristol: Tries: Baber (47min), penalty try (65), Bennett (73). Conversions: Hull 2. London Irish: Tries: O'Shea (9), Woods (13), Venter 2 (17, 59), Kirke (33), Boer (44), Bishop (46). Conversions: Woods 4.
SCORING SEQUENCE (Bristol first): 0-7, 0-12, 0-17, 0-24 (half-time), 0-29, 5-29, 5-36, 5-43, 12-43, 19-43.
BRISTOL: P Hull; M Misson, G Leaupepe (rep: J Pritchard, 63min), C Hassan, A Larkin; S Martin, G Baber; S Emms, D Tamati, J Wring (rep: P Lemoine, 54-59, 61), C Eagle (rep: J Brownrigg, 53), G Giles, A Charron, M Bennett, M Gabey.
LONDON IRISH: C O'Shea; J Bishop, N Burrows, B Venter (rep: R Todd, 60), N Woods; S Bachop, K Putt; N Hatley (rep: M Worsley, 60), R Kirke (rep: M Howe, 60), K Fullman, R Strudwick, M O'Kelly, J Boer, R Gallacher, K Spicer.
Referee: C Rees (London).

Howley's presence allows Cardiff to shine

Cardiff 40
Swansea.............................19

By Gerald Davies

IN RECOVERING from the defeat of 31-15 by Swansea in the first week of December to win so handsomely on Saturday, Cardiff had to perform better than they had done all season.

Their form has been fitful, not only from one week to the next, but within individual matches. With a team of many talents and an envious number of international players, they promise more than they deliver. There is nothing new in this — inconsistency is their very frustrating condition. They had lost their previous five matches and this was as good a way as any to stop the rot.

Swansea have had the opposite experience. They had succeeded on six consecutive occasions and have been playing impressively. To close this gap, the home team needed a special performance and although they were not uniformally good, Cardiff had, in Robert Howley, the player who made the difference. If Cardiff lost lineout possession to Andy Moore, they faired far better than expected elsewhere. Time and again, they turned Swansea over in the tussle for the loose ball.

If Cardiff had the better of the territory, they lacked the subtlety to break down the opposition's threequarter defence in the way that Van Rensburg or Weatherley, when he came on, were able to. The tackling was fiercely aggressive. Yet, rising above this, Howley, at critical moments, made the right breaks.

This was as good a match as we are likely to see in Wales this season. With a capacity crowd of 14,000, the atmosphere was appropriate for such a contest. There were no trophies at stake, but the reputation of each club was. Six tries were scored and, but for desperate cover defence, another half a dozen went begging.

The highlight of the first half was the home team's brilliant counter-attacking. This was at a time when Swansea were beginning to put their game together after a thundering opening salvo by Cardiff. From underneath their posts, Steve Moore and Craig Morgan came away to send Sullivan on a 70-metre run to score.

When Swansea increased the pace of the game after the interval and had several threatening attacks, Howley came away from a scrum in his own half to chip ahead and chase. When he had the line in his sights, Van Rensburg tackled him as he was about to gather the ball. A penalty try was awarded.

Swansea responded beautifully when Thomas delayed his pass for Van Rensburg to take an angled run and pave the way for a try by Rees. Although chances came their way, the visitors failed to make further inroads. Two penalty goals by Thomas closed the gap, but two late tries by Cardiff — giving them a total of five in all — provided a scoreline that did not reflect the true balance of the contest.

SCORERS. Cardiff: Tries: Sullivan (16min), Hill (40), penalty try (47), Wintle (72), Moore (77). Conversions: Jarvis 3. Penalty goals: Jarvis 3 (2, 9, 39). Swansea: Try: Rees (51). Conversion: A Thomas. Penalty goals: A Thomas 4 (19, 43, 59, 63).
SCORING SEQUENCE (Cardiff first): 3-0, 6-0, 13-0, 13-3, 16-3, 21-3 (half-time); 21-6, 28-6, 28-13, 28-16, 28-19, 35-19, 40-19.
CARDIFF: C Morgan; S Hill, M Hall, M Wintle, A Sullivan (rep: L Botham, 63min); L Jarvis, R Howley; S John (rep: A Lewis, 69), D Geraghty, D Young (rep: L Mustoe, 63), S Moore, D Jones (rep: K Stewart, 66), G Williams, P Wheeler (rep: J Tait, 59), O Kacala.
SWANSEA: M Back (rep: D Weatherley, 58); R Rees, M Taylor, C van Rensburg, M Robinson; A Thomas (rep: A Lawson, 76), R Jones; C Loader (rep: P Anthony, 43), G Jenkins (rep: C Wells, 76), B Evans, P Arnold, A Moore (rep: P Moriarty, 51), C Charvis, D Thomas, L Jones.
Referee: F Howard (Liverpool).

TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Swansea	18	13	0	5	562	349	26
Northampton	18	12	0	6	484	402	24
Saracens	18	11	1	6	527	400	23
Leicester	17	11	0	6	463	320	22
Cardiff	17	11	0	6	465	370	22
Wasps	18	10	1	7	491	368	21
Newcastle	17	10	0	7	464	394	20
Bath	18	9	0	9	435	398	18
Harlequins	16	9	0	7	415	408	18
London Irish	17	9	0	8	413	407	18
Richmond	16	9	0	7	406	449	18
Gloucester	18	8	0	10	360	385	16
Sale	18	7	0	11	434	515	14
London Scot	17	5	0	12	306	478	10
Bedford	18	2	0	16	354	581	4
W Hartlepool	17	2	0	15	269	626	4

Worcester worthy of The Shed's respect

Gloucester 31
Worcester..........................17

By Mark Baldwin

IT IS only 25 miles down the M5 from Worcester to Kingsholm, but, until Saturday, it was a rugby journey that had never been made. New avenues should always be open, however, to those aspiring to greater things and Worcester know now that they are not far short of top quality, although Richard Hill, the Gloucester director of rugby, was not being uncharitable when he suggested that "quite considerable" additions would have to be made for Worcester to to prosper among the elite.

Les Cusworth, the Worcester coach, had cause for disappointment that Gloucester were not run closer after a powerful forward effort. Their 2,000 travelling supporters even out-shouted The Shed at times, especially when the outstanding Jim Jenner peeled off a maul to cut Gloucester's lead to 18-17 just before the interval.

Worcester spoilt a committed first half with two moments of sloppiness, a missed pass in the centre allowing Mark Mapletoft to dash 75 metres to score before another handling mistake resulted in a try for Philippe Saint-André.

This, though, was a day to praise Worcester and a day to remember for the influential Mapletoft, whose partner, Tina, gave birth to a daughter, Ellie, midway through the game.

SCORERS: Gloucester: Tries: Mapletoft (8min), Saint-André (23), Ojomoh (44), Fortey (61). Conversion: Mapletoft. Penalty goals: Mapletoft 3 (5, 20, 57). Worcester: Tries: Richardson (17), Jenner (40). Conversions: Liley 2. Penalty goal: Liley (30).
SCORING SEQUENCE (Gloucester first): 3-0, 10-0, 10-7, 13-7, 18-7, 18-10, 18-17 (half-time), 23-17, 26-17, 31-17.
GLOUCESTER: C Catling; B Johnson, T Fanolua, R Greenslade-Jones, P Saint-André (rep: A Lumsdon, 74min); M Mapletoft, N Cane; T Woodman, N McCarthy (rep: C Fortey, 40), A Deacon (rep: A Powles, 65), R Fidler, M Cornwell (rep: D Sims, 40), E Pearce, N Carter (rep: A Hazell, 65), S Ojomoh.
WORCESTER: J Liley; S Morris, D Hughes (rep: P Holford, 54), R Myler, N Baxter (rep: N Malone, 57); R Le Bas, B Fenley (rep: S Powell, 77); M Linnett, D Ball (rep: G Houston, 77), P Mitchell (rep: J Broady, 28-36), R Denhardt, C Raymond, G Clark (rep: M Gibert, 74), N Richardson, J Jenner (rep: E Orgee, 54).
Referee: R Goodliffe (Yorkshire).

Henley deliver a knockout blow to suffering Bedford

Bedford..............................22
Henley................................29

By Nicolas Andrews

THEY don't like to be called a club in crisis, but Bedford's troubled season hit a new low with this Tetley's Bitter Cup fourth-round defeat at Goldington Road yesterday. Henley, level with Manchester at the top of the Jewson National League first division, thoroughly deserved the victory over their Allied Dunbar Premiership opponents. It may have been the shock of the round, but there was no class divide evident on the pitch.

"In comparison to some sides in our division, their scrum was reasonably lightweight," Jerry Sampson, the Henley lock, said of Bedford afterwards.

"We were confident," Phil Osman, the fly half and acting captain, added. "There was no reason to be intimidated because we expect to be playing them in the league next season."

That confidence was in stark contrast to Bedford's nervousness and indecision. Coolness, width and creativity were called for, particularly in the last 20 minutes, but too often Bedford ploughed a panicky, predictable furrow down the middle, which played straight into the hands of a resolute Henley defence. A glance at the league tables would have told Bedford that Henley's defensive record is second to none this season.

Henley took an important early lead when Sharp gathered a clearance kick by Stebbings and forced his way through two half-tackles. Bedford struck back when their most profitable tactical ploy — the penalty kick to the corner, followed by a drive from the lineout — brought a try for Forster, but Henley responded with a similar move as Sampson won a lineout and Berryman was carried over.

Bedford's most fluent move of the half yielded a try for Whetstone as the full back raced on to Ewens's kick through, but Whetstone was left floundering in the mud soon afterwards as Sharp burst through his tackle for a deserved second try. The Bedford full back picked himself up to score in the left-hand corner after Harrison had tapped and run a penalty, but Roke kicked a penalty goal in the final minute of the half to give Henley a seven-point interval lead.

Still, the majority of spectators in a disappointing crowd of 1,806 waited expectantly for Bedford to find another gear and the sort of form that took them so close to victory at Newcastle last Tuesday. Indeed, Forster levelled the scores from another lineout and maul and, with 30 minutes to go, Bedford had the opportunity to pull clear.

Instead, though, it was Henley who scored. Sharp broke from halfway and found Russell Osman with an inside pass. The centre fed his brother, Phil, who went over unopposed. Bedford's gloom was completed when Straeuli, their captain and director of rugby, was carried off with another ankle injury.

"We have disappointed ourselves and our supporters," Straeuli said afterwards. "We had to slow the game down and it needed a cool head, but we did the opposite. It was the worst we've played in my three years in a Bedford side."

The court case between Frank Warren, the Bedford owner, and Don King, the boxing promoter, starts tomorrow and, one way or another, Bedford could be out of their financial limbo within a week. Money matters to Henley, too, of course. There were no win bonuses for a team that will remain semi-professional even if they are promoted, but more traditional celebrations followed by Monday morning hangovers seemed to be the pressing problem last night.

SCORERS: Bedford: Tries: Forster 2 (9, 49), Whetstone 2 (21, 36). Conversion: Yapp. Henley: Tries: Sharp 2 (4, 34), Berryman (18), P Osman (57). Conversions: Roke 3. Penalty goal: Roke (39).
SCORING SEQUENCE (Bedford first): 0-7, 5-7, 5-12, 10-12, 10-19, 15-19, 15-22 (half-time), 22-22, 22-29.
BEDFORD: B Whetstone; R Underwood, J Ewens, D Harris (rep: F Howard, 62min), D O'Mahony; A Yapp, C Harrison (rep: S Crabb, 41); C Boyd (rep: A Ozdemir, 50), J Richards, V Hartland, D Zaltzman, S Murray, R Winters, J Forster, R Straeuli (rep: J Cockle, 65).
HENLEY: J Stebbings; D Roke, R Osman, T Walsh, G Sharp; P Osman, B Ayres; R Fuller, D Cassidy (rep: W Phillips, 50), R Lehner, J Sampson, S Berryman (rep: J Hendriksz, 41), S Barnes, M Venner, A Mortimore.
Referee: N Yates (Cheshire).

Saracens freeze out minnows

Morley 8
Saracens 76

By Christopher Irvine

EIGHT months after Saracens strolled past Wasps on a sun-dappled afternoon at Twickenham, the Tetley's Bitter Cup-holders began their defence yesterday in the less exalted surroundings of Scatcherd Lane with a wintry walkover in West Yorkshire.

Morley had conceded the tenth of 12 tries when the home crowd, who refused to give up on their side, raised the roof. Chris Hall, the full back, broke through the Saracens cover for a cherished touchdown: 74 one-sided minutes had preceded it.

Morley, 38 places below Saracens at one off the bottom of the Jewson National League first division, looked every inch a side that had not won in the league since October. A moneyspinning tie had also to be judged against the damage done by Allied Dunbar Premiership opposition to already fragile confidence in Morley's relegation struggle.

Saracens, thoroughly professional and utterly merciless, comfortably overhauled their cup record win of 59-31 at Blackheath in the fourth round last year. Five tries were added to seven in the first half, during which the home side breached the Saracens 22 only once, from a restart.

Brendon Daniel completed a hat-trick on the right wing, although opposite him, the promising Adam Standeven, who is interesting several rugby league clubs, gave a reasonable account of himself in Morley's few attacks of note. Tom Tabua and Alan Pierre fought to the bitter end up front, but these were minor triumphs.

Volunteers spent two hours with buckets of hot water attempting to thaw out the ground, but the way that Morley stood frozen to the spot from the first exchanges simply invited trouble. "The pitch really wasn't playable," Mark Evans, the Saracens director of coaching, said, "but professionalism was the difference. It's so much harder for junior sides to compete now."

SCORERS: Morley: Try: Hall (74min). Penalty goal: Bamber (53). Saracens: Tries: Daniel 3 (19, 38, 46), Olsen 2 (4, 33), Johnson (11), Penaud (17), Cover (23), Singer (62), Grewcock (73), Cole (77), [illegible]. Conversions: Johnson 8.
SCORING SEQUENCE (Morley first): 0-5, 0-12, 0-19, 0-24, 0-29, 0-36, 0-41 (half-time), 0-48, 3-43, 3-55, 3-62, 8-62, 8-69, 8-76.
MORLEY: C Hall; J Bamber (rep: C Johnson, 71min), G Bono, A Sales, A Standeven; T Bamber (rep: M Sales, 71), J T[illegible] (rep: [illegible] Worsley, 65min); A Goodman, S [illegible] (rep: S Worsley, 65), S Wilson (rep: N Sykes, 71), A Pierre, P Stewart (rep: S [illegible], 65), I Spunce (rep: S Smith, 65), L Hamilton, T Tabua.
SARACENS: G Johnson; B Daniel, P Constable (rep: B Johnston, 53), [illegible]; S Ravenscroft, R Wallace (rep: M Singer, 15), A Penaud, M Olsen (rep: S Free, 55); A Cover, G Botterman, J Dawson, K Chesney, D Grewcock, P Ogilvie, R Hill (rep: B Coles, 53), T Coker.
Referee: T Fisher (Manchester).

Inspired Kendal so close to upset

Kendal...............................20
London Scottish..................25

By Alasdair Reid

A HEROIC performance by Kendal and very nearly a heroic win as well. At the end of this remarkable match, they were camped on the London Scottish line, just as they had been throughout most of a final quarter in which they threw fury in the faces of London Scottish, hauling themselves back from a 25-10 deficit with a performance of enormous passion and heart.

Only time ran out for them, for you sensed that their adrenalin would have sustained them until the middle of next week. Roared on by a capacity crowd of 3,000 at their compact Mint Bridge ground, the Jewson National League second division north side humbled their Allied Dunbar Premiership opponents with their endeavour and came achingly close to claiming a place in the Tetley's Bitter Cup fifth round.

That would have been no more than they deserved, for, as well as appearing to want that place more than London Scottish, they also out-scored them 4-3 on tries. At the end, only the erratic goal-kicking by Casey Mee, the Kendal fly half, denied the team a remarkable win and the town an excuse for the biggest party Lakeland would have seen in years.

"I am very, very proud," Peter Kremer, the Kendal coach, said. "The biggest fear was that we wouldn't perform." That worry was banished by Mee's try after nine minutes and, even as London Scottish edged towards their 17-5 interval lead, with tries by MacDonald and Forrest and a penalty goal and two conversions by De Beer, it was clear that Kendal were performing well.

Basing their game on powerful driving mauls, they reasserted themselves just after the break, with a try by Whitehead from a tap penalty move. London Scottish answered by putting Manson-Bishop over the line, but that was only a cue for Kendal's incredible assault towards the end, when two tries by Colin Wolstenholme took them so close to the win they arguably deserved.

SCORERS: Kendal: Tries: Mee (9), Whitehead (42), Wolstenholme 2 (67, 71). London Scottish: Tries: MacDonald (17), Forrest (22), Manson-Bishop (60). Conversions: De Beer 2. Penalty goals: De Beer 2 (33, 55).
SCORING SEQUENCE (Kendal first): 5-0, 5-7, 5-14, 5-17 (half-time), 10-17, 10-20, 10-25, 15-25, 20-25.
KENDAL: P Dodds; J Balmer, S Healey (rep: Voortman), D Seath (rep: D Pearce, 51min), C Mee; P Thompson, B Coxon; J Nicholson (rep: I Gowing, 17), N Pearson (rep: I Thompson, 40), R Harryman, M Capstick, C Wolstenholme, S Whitehead (rep: K Robinson, 59), A Bateson.
LONDON SCOTTISH: S Forrest; C Sharman, R Davies, J Bonney (rep: D Lee, 51min), K Milligan; J de Beer, S Cook (rep: C Murtagh, 68); M MacDonald, D Cummins (rep: D Rucham, 47), P Johnstone, G Manson-Bishop, M McAtamney, T Davies, S Holmes, R Hunter.
Referee: S Lloyshon (Bristol).

Brown sweetens Richmond's day

Richmond 46
Newbury.............................12

By Mark Souster

ASSISTED by a hat-rick of tries by Spencer Brown, Richmond eased through to the fifth round of the Tetley's Bitter Cup against Newbury at the Madejski Stadium yesterday. Richmond, for whom this was a derby match, given their relocation to Reading, outscored Newbury by eight tries to two, but the Jewson National League first division side can be heartened by their competitive performance and, in Tom Holloway, the full back, who scored his side's second try, they possessed the man of the match.

Newbury, coached by Kevin Bowring, formerly of Wales, have enjoyed mixed fortunes in the league, but they raised their game sufficiently in the opening quarter — during which Richmond were restricted to one try — to belie their status. They showed a commendable willingness to counter-attack and tackled courageously, none better than Tyrone Howe, the former Oxford Blue, who denied Brown a certain try in the second half and almost cut Pini in two in the first. They struggled to compete in the scrummage, which resulted in disrupted service for Farr, the scrum half.

After Brown had opened the scoring, Newbury had three successive penalties in the right-hand corner of the Richmond 22. Instead of opting for a kick at goal and the possibility of at least three points to raise morale, they chose to kick for position. However, between them, Poihipi and Blake contrived to slice their kicks, thus negating the advantage.

In front of a crowd of 2,859, Newbury had two periods in the first half encamped on the Richmond line, but the nearest that they came to scoring was when Craig Davies was tackled into touch a yard out by Ben Clarke, playing his first game for a month after fracturing a cheekbone. Ultimately, the fact that Richmond are accustomed to the greater pace and intensity of professional rugby gave them the advantage.

SCORERS: Richmond: Tries: Brown 3 (5min, 70, 80), Vander (29), Pichot (32), Waine (35), Bateman (47), Chapman (64). Conversions: Va'a 3. Newbury: Tries: Gully (40), Holloway (73). Conversion: Poihipi.
SCORING SEQUENCE (Richmond first): 5-0, 10-0, 17-0, 24-0, 24-7 (half-time), 29-7, 34-7, 41-7, 41-12, 46-12.
RICHMOND: M Pini (rep: D Chapman, 61); N Waine, A Bateman, M Deane, S Brown; E Va'a, A Pichot (rep: A Moore, 81); D McFarland, A Cuthbert, J Davies (rep: M Fitzgerald, 61), C Quinnell, C Gillies, R Hutton, A Vander (rep: L Cabannes, 71), B Clarke.
NEWBURY: T Holloway; T Howe, R Blake, G Reeyer, J Griffiths (rep: T Oarman, 68); J Poihipi, J Farr (rep: B Walder, 62); S Brown (rep: D Davis, 76), N Collins (rep: J Beamer, 65), R Kellam, P Curtis, S Muir (rep: T Anicic, 76), C Davies, S Gully (rep: C Hart, 63), G Powell (rep: J Kingdon, 63).
Referee: D Grashoff (East Midlands).

David Hands, rugby correspondent, sees the French champions beaten in style at Ravenhill

Red hand of history beckons for Ulster

Away with the politics, with those whose narrow views encompass profit and not sport. This was one of the great days in rugby's history, when the breath of a passionate crowd of 20,000 drove their white-shirted heroes to a 33-27 victory that few had envisaged and which could yet do the same when Ulster play Colomiers in the European Cup final at Lansdowne Road on January 30.

This is not a great Ulster team: two of the province's locks of considerable stature, Paddy Johns and Jeremy Davidson, ply their trade elsewhere, their scrum struggled throughout at Ravenhill on Saturday, they were down to their last centre, and Sheldon Coulter and Andy Park, their wings, are not even assured of their club places at Ballymena. But come the hour and the XV became an expression of the longing of a community, not just in Ulster but from all over Ireland.

Observers there speak of a sporting void, most recently occupied by Jack Charlton's football team in the Republic but now waiting to be filled. Rugby could do it, if an Ireland team can sustain its acknowledged ability to achieve more than just famous but isolated victories. Ulster, Ireland's first European finalists, have shown that they can: from poor beginnings, they have won seven successive matches, three of them against the cream of French club rugby, Toulouse (twice) and now Stade Français.

"What Europe has done for us is to destroy the mystique of French rugby," Donal Lenihan, the Ireland team manager, said. Within eight days, Lenihan will be able to judge whether that is truly so: a week after Ulster's final against Colomiers (who beat an injury-ravaged Perpignan 10-6 in Toulouse), Ireland play France in the Five Nations Championship, also at Lansdowne Road, a fixture that they have not won since 1983.

They will surely do so with David Humphreys at fly half. The little Dungannon man, captain in the regrettable absence of Mark McCall — to whose off-field leadership Humphreys paid tribute — showed all the wit and tactical acumen apparently lacking in the Ireland back division. His try, three minutes after half-time, was at once a statement of intent and a brilliantly-executed ploy that proved to be a turning point in the game.

It also demonstrated that Ulster were not there only to disrupt but also to play constructive rugby. Stade Français, the French champions and blessed with outstanding players throughout the team, were reminiscent of Brive in the final of last season against Bath, when the Frenchmen lost their collective tactical sense; for a fortnight, Stade had prepared for a day of wind and rain and muddy going, yet, when they discovered sunshine and a firm ground, a player as experienced as Diego Dominguez fell down.

His side could have won the game through the forwards: of their three tries, the first came from a pushover scrum, the others from a maul after a close-range lineout. All Dominguez had to do was ensure that the game was played around the Ulster 22 and kick the goals that followed; but he knew he had good backs and dwelled too long on the ball before using them, leaving a midfield that Ulster had identified as not having the softest hands in the world to be clattered by the voracious Jan Cunningham.

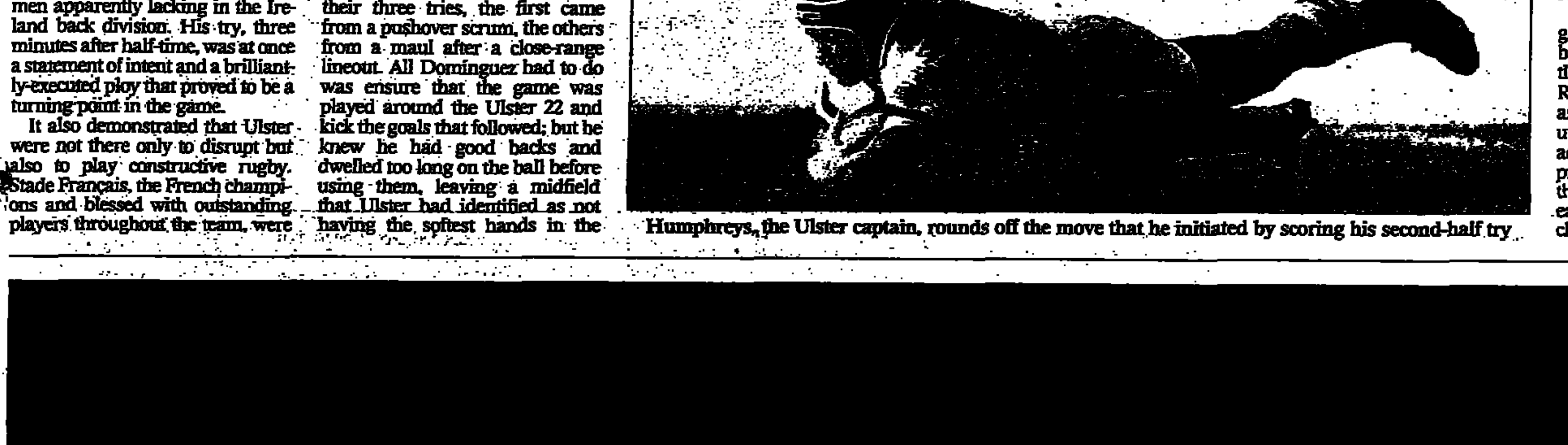
The English-speakers among the Stade players admitted that there had been a loss of equilibrium as the game continually edged away from them. There was an inclination to blame marginal decisions by Jim Fleming, the referee, that erred towards Ulster, but the statistics show that to be no excuse; having been critical of the match arrangements and persuaded European Rugby Cup Ltd (ERC) to change the match-day from a Friday night to Saturday, Stade had every reason to believe that their ambition of becoming European champions could be realised.

"But the crowd were so close to us, they were so passionate, there was no way we could let them down, never mind ourselves," Humphreys said. "Over the last two or three months, people have come to see us as spectators and gone away supporters." Such backing proved to be inspirational for forwards such as Mark Blair and Stephen McKinty, the veteran, who claimed the first try after rolling round the front of a lineout.

Yet no player did more to win the game than Simon Mason, the full back, who rose to fame at Newcastle and Orrell, then struggled with Richmond. In Ulster, he has found assurance and goal-kicking of the utmost security: 20 points were added to his 196 points scored in 15 previous games this season, among them an assertive dropped goal early on that punished a wayward clearance by Dominguez.



Mason, who kicked 20 points for his team, celebrates the victory that put Ulster into the final of the European Cup. Photographs: Mike Cooper/Allsport



Humphreys, the Ulster captain, rounds off the move that he initiated by scoring his second-half try

Nevertheless, few would have taken victory for granted when Ulster turned round leading only 11-10. It was, it seemed, only a question of time before the Stade forwards took a stranglehold, until Humphreys skipped to the blind side of a scrum and popped a perfect chip-kick over the defence. Coulter took it on the full, drew the cover and fed Humphreys on the outside, the fly half beating Christophe Moni in a 45-metre sprint to the line.

Instantly, Ulster unleashed another move that released Park into space: the wing chipped too, Viars was gobbled up on his own line and penalised for not releasing the ball. Mason's penalty goal gave Ulster ten points in as many minutes and, when Humphreys snapped over another dropped goal, the crowd could scarcely believe it.

But Stade came once to within four points of Ulster, once to within three and, at 30-27 with 12 minutes remaining, a final place was less than secure. Then Mason, from 44 metres, drilled over his fifth penalty goal and, against inspired Ulster tackling, French cohesion and the chance of a match-winning try and conversion faded on the triumphant cheers echoing up to the Castlereagh Hills.

SCORERS: Ulster: Tries: McKinty (16min) Humphreys (43). **Conversion:** Mason **Penalty goals:** Mason 5 (4, 49, 62, 66, 73). **Dropped goals:** Mason (9), Humphreys (53). **Stade Français: Tries:** Juillet 2 (31, 56), Lièvremont (68) **Conversions:** Dominguez 3 **Penalty goals:** Dominguez 2 (12, 60)

SCORING SEQUENCE (Ulster first): 3-0, 6-0, 6-3, 11-3, 11-10 (half-time), 18-10, 21-10, 24-10, 24-17, 24-20, 27-20, 30-20, 30-27, 33-27.

ULSTER: S Mason, S Coulter, J Cunningham, J Bell, A Park, D Humphreys, A Matchett, J Fitzpatrick, A Clarke, R Irwin (rep: G Leslie, 54min), M Blair, G Longwell, S McKinty, A Ward, A McWhirter (rep: D Topping, 73).

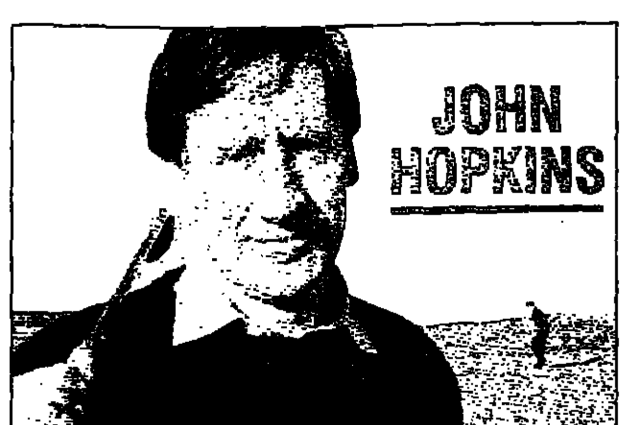
STADE FRANÇAIS: S Viars, A Gomes, R Dourthe, C Mytton, T Lombard (rep: F Comba, 75-78); D Dominguez, C Lassucq; S Marconnet (rep: S Simon, 50), L Pedrosa (rep: V Moscato, 50), P de Villiers, H Chaffardon, D George, C Moni, R Pool-Jones (rep: M Lièvremont, 50), C Juillet

Referee: J Fleming (Scotland)

□ Two critical meetings this week could help shape the future of European competition: Brian Baister, the chairman of the Rugby Football Union's management board, and Francis Baron, his chief executive, are due to meet French federation officials in Paris today, while, on Friday, representatives of the English and French clubs meet.

They will do so in an atmosphere on the French side that is less than enamoured of ERC, the present tournament organisers. There is a belief among the leading French clubs, not obviously justified by results, that the organisers have leant over backwards to help home-union teams and the French, whose existing participation agreement ends this season, know that they are in a strong position to determine the future of the competition.

Marking card for route to golfing success



The first harbinger that a new golfing year is about to begin is the conclusion of the President's Putter at Rye. The shapely East Sussex town is a glorious place in which to take a few practice swings for the coming months. In an age of subsonic flights, fourballs and 440-yard doglegged holes with water up the left-hand side, Rye stands for steel shafts, foursomes and playing the ball as it lies. It is all the better for that.

A second harbinger is the rituals well-known to any golfing traveller — the zipping up of the golf bag in a coverall, the riffling of a passport's pages, the taxi at the door ready to leave for the airport. It is, in short, time for professional golfers to get back to work. By now, Europe's best have their schedules pencilled in from January to November.

There are more than 40 events on the European Tour. No one can play them all, although, by competing on other continents as well, Andrew Chandler played 42 events in 1986 and thereby won the "Iron Man" award. By the year's end, Colin Montgomerie will have played approximately 30 events worldwide, as will Ian Woosnam and Darren Clarke, while for some of the lesser professionals it may be nearer 40. But which ones, in which country, on which continent?

It is sometimes easier to select a club for a shot of 150 yards downhill and downwind to a green that falls away than it is to pick out precisely the tournaments in which a player will stand the best chance of a good payday, a bucketful of Ryder Cup points and of improving his position in the world rankings — so important now that the top 60 players are being elevated to golf's premier division. "Ian's schedule is the one constant topic of conversation at every formal meeting we have," Andrew Hampel, Woosnam's manager, said.

The criteria are: the major championships, which fall in April, June, July and August, and providing the best build-up for these events. This year, there is also the Ryder Cup in September and the three inaugural, hugely lucrative World Golf Championship tournaments, in the United States, in February and August, and in Spain, in November. Some men want to get properly focused by competing for one, two or three weeks immediately before such events, though rarely more. The exception is Lee Westwood, who won his first tournament in Europe in his eighteenth consecutive event.

Golfers have favoured and less-favoured months. Greg Norman and February do not chime perfectly after Norman withdrew from an event in that month after 54 holes last year. On the other hand, it is impossible to remove Nick Faldo from golf courses in July, the month in which both he and his mother were born, in which he took delivery of his first clubs and won his English Amateur title, among other personal landmarks. With portents such as these, it was inevitable that Faldo should have won three Open Championships — in July.

Then there is Westwood and November in the Far East. Days of continuous water torture would not persuade Chandler, Westwood's manager, to allow his star player to compete anywhere other than Japan in the eleventh month of the year, because there Westwood has won the same tournament in each of the past three years and last November won £360,000 in two weeks.

This was the season that young Stephen Gallacher has been waiting for after returning to full fitness from a back injury and turning in some good performances on the Challenge Tour in 1998. "Not so fast," Mark Sharman, his manager, said. "A long flight to Australia at the end of the month facing Australians who are acclimatised is not ideal. You might get a lot of money, but you could risk your injured back. Better to start in Dubai early in February."

Players form an affinity with types of courses. Many of them love links courses and all of them love tournaments from which they can return on Sunday night. This is not easy if every connecting flight goes through Heathrow. It was impossible for Neil Coles, who refused to fly anywhere.

To solve this problem, Sam Torrance moved down from Largs in Ayrshire to Sunningdale and Clarke moved from Ulster. Woosnam bought his own plane to speed him back to Jersey, thereby joining Jack Nicklaus and Norman as an aircraft owner. This year, for the first time, Westwood will fly privately to and from tournaments in Europe, as Colin Montgomerie has done for some time.

"It means the difference between being home at eight o'clock on a Sunday night and having a nice day on Monday or getting home at midday on Monday," Chandler said. "Believe me, in the course of an 11-month season, those extra hours mean a lot — perhaps an extra 20 or 30 nights at home. It is part of why Lee remains in Europe."

> 'The key for players is to remember that golf leads to everything else'

Paul Theroux wrote that "extensive travelling induces a feeling of encapsulation, and travel, so broadening at first, contracts the mind". But it doesn't half expand the bank balance. Yet money, apparently, is never a factor. "If a player is contemplating travelling halfway around the world to collect money, then he is better off staying where he is," Hampel said. "The key is to remember that golf leads to everything else."

Yet even for the busiest player in the busiest of years, there is one date that is immovable. For Westwood, it fell on Saturday, when he married Laurae Coltart in Worksop. That was one date in his schedule that was sacrosanct.

Duval closes in on victory

By Our Sports Staff

DAVID DUVAL ended the day as he had started it — with a five-stroke lead — after the third round of the Mercedes Championship in Hawaii, on Saturday.

Duval, of the United States, closed in on his eighth victory in his past 27 tournaments on the US PGA Tour by carding a five-under-par 68 on the Kapalua Resort's Plantation course. His round included six birdies and one bogey. The only blemish came at the par-four 16th, where he drove into a fairway bunker, missed a 10ft putt for par and thereby ended a stretch of 44 consecutive holes without a bogey.

He leads Fred Funk, his countryman, who also shot a 68. Billy Mayfair, who carded a 69, is a further stroke behind. Tiger Woods excited the gallery with six birdies for a flawless 67, but it was only enough to move him into a tie for fourth, with Jim Furyk and Vijay Singh, seven strokes behind Duval.

"Anytime you can make five or six birdies in a round, you can't complain," Duval said.


Duval: confident

"I'm obviously playing quite well, so poor shots or mishits never really enter your mind. The confidence just feeds on itself."

Funk, who has made just one bogey in 54 holes, acknowledged that his chances of overtaking Duval in the final round were slim and paid tribute to the leader.

"Right now, there's no question he [Duval] is the best in the world. He's just going to beat you with pure talent," Funk said. "He doesn't get overly excited about a bad hole because he knows he's going to have a lot more good ones."

■ Kenny Druce, of Australia, claimed his first Australasian PGA Tour victory in the Victorian Open yesterday. The 26-year-old shot a final round 74 to finish 13-under par and beat Lucas Parsons, his compatriot, by three shots.

Dale, an outstanding winner of the President's Putter, punches an iron out of wispy rough to the green at the 9th during his 4 and 3 win over the left-handed Brisson

Putter winner delights with quality iron play

By John Hopkins
Golf Correspondent

CHRIS DALE ended the duopoly of Charlie Rotheroe and Neil Pabari, the gifted players who have dominated the President's Putter at Rye for the past three years, by winning it for the first time yesterday with a display of golf such as has not been seen in this event for many years.

Dale, who is a stockbroker in London, defeated Richard Bisson, a member of Rye and one of the few left-handers to have reached the final, by 4 and 3.

Not many amateurs could have withstood Dale, a past captain of Cambridge, whose play for much of yesterday was almost as good it could have been. He has a firm, controlled swing, hits his irons crisply and, on the evidence of yesterday, putts beautifully.

In the morning semi-final, when he defeated Pabari, the holder, on the last green, he was round in an approximate 74. Significantly, however, Dale played markedly better after turning for home, taking only 35 strokes to play his inward half.

"I was very nervous on the front nine against Neil," Dale said. "I was aware of how good he was and his reputation, but then I relaxed and began to play better and, by the end, I was feeling very confident."

Even so, he had to hole a 12-footer on the 18th to beat Pabari and win the right to play Bisson.

The muse then remained with Dale, 28, who plays off three at Walton Heath. He was out in 33 on a bitingly cold afternoon and was three up. Two strokes stand out in the memory — his second to the 4th, which ended close enough for him to birdie the hole, and his second to the 9th, played from wispy right rough, which pulled up as if hitting buffers. He birdied that hole, too, and the ease with which he made his ball stop caused old-timers among the 100 or so spectators to reminisce that, in the old days at Rye, when watering of greens was far less scientific than it is now, such a shot would have been all but impossible.

Bisson, a member of the home club and of Formby, had not done much wrong. Indeed, simply to have reached the final was an achievement for someone whose previous best achievement in this competition was to win a place in the last eight.

His only really bad shot in the final came at the 10th, when, half-distracted by a spectator, he pulled his second shot into some lurking gorse bushes. This was the moment when any real hope of a comeback disappeared, though he did birdie the 12th after hitting a glorious iron to 3ft.

On the 14th, Bisson pushed his tee shot up a bank. Dale's crisp four-iron to the heart of the green seemed to be that of a man intent on winning. That put him four holes up and a half in five on the 15th, a long hole played from the new back tee, brought the end, with Dale needing three pars to be round in 68.

There is genuine concern among the elders of the Oxford and Cambridge Golfing Society that this charming event may be losing a little of its appeal. A final such as yesterday's is all that was necessary to remind everyone that this competition has produced some outstanding golf and golfers in years gone by and should continue to do so.

If there is a diminution of interest in one of the more unusual, and enjoyable, amateur events on the calendar, then perhaps it lies more in the eyes of the beholder than in the competition itself.

RESULTS

RESULTS: Saturday: Fifth round: S Bennett (C) bt J Burdek (O) 5 and 4; R Bisson (O) bt M Benka (O) 2 and 1; J Hudson (C) bt J Nash (O) 1 hole; N Burke (O) bt D Sparrow (O) 4 and 3; C Dale (C) bt G MacSween (C) 5 and 4; S Ellis (C) b M Williamson (C) at 20th; C Rotheroe (O) bt O Malik (C) 4 and 3; N Pabari (O) bt P Pentecost (C) 6 and 5. **Quarter-finals:** Bisson bt Bennett 2 and 1; Hudson bt Burke at 19th; Dale bt Ellis 1 hole; Pabari bt Rotheroe 2 and 1. **Yesterday: Semi-finals:** Bisson bt Hudson 1 hole; Dale bt Pabari 1 hole. **Final:** Dale bt Bisson 4 and 3.

SAILING

Clipper 2000 awarded to Portsmouth

By Edward Gorman, Sailing Correspondent

THE Times Clipper 2000 round-the-world race for paying amateurs is to start and finish in Portsmouth. Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, the chairman of Clipper Ventures and the race director, will announce today at the London International Boat Show.

The race, which will feature up to 12 identical 60ft yachts will set off from Gunwharf Quays in Portsmouth Harbour on October 14, 2000, returning approximately ten months later after a 34,000-mile voyage and at least 12 stops in places as varied as Havana and Hawaii.

Sir Robin's first two Clipper races, including Clipper '98, which is on its way from the Galapagos Islands to Hawaii, have both started from Plymouth. However, after reviewing the options, Sir Robin decided that Portsmouth would be a more attractive option.

"Without wishing to sound disparaging about Plymouth, we felt that Portsmouth had offered a package and support for the race that was unequalled by any other port," Sir Robin said. "Of particular attraction are the substantial improvements to yachting services and spectator facilities in Portsmouth Harbour proposed over the next few years."

The David Pedrick-designed Clipper yachts will be berthed at two former Ministry of Defence sites at Gunwharf Quays on the waterfront and at the Royal Clarence Yard in Gosport, which is being redeveloped into a dedicated world-class yachting events centre.

Portsmouth Harbour Events, an independent consortium, has been set up to organise a programme of shoreside activities leading up to the start and finish of the race and both the Berkeley Group, which is developing the £100 million Gunwharf Quays area, and Portsmouth City Council are members of the consortium.

The Times Clipper 2000 will follow the proven format of previous races, charting a course round the middle latitudes of the world. The race will comprise six legs and will be decided by accumulated points per leg as the crews, led by professional skippers, make their way round the planet.

The boats will each be sponsored by British towns or cities, which, possibly in conjunction with local businesses or individuals, will pay £100,000 to secure the name of the boat. This week at the Boat Show, representatives will attend briefings by Sir Robin and senior executives of Times Newspapers. Among those places to be represented are Glasgow, Ipswich, Blackpool, Oxford, Leicester, Belfast, Bristol, Northampton, Guernsey, Jersey and Portsmouth itself. Patrick Sherriff, the marketing director of Times Newspapers, said that the aim of the briefings was to help the cities get a feel for how Clipper '98 is going and explain what the 2000 event can offer in terms of advertising and commercial opportunities.

"We want to help them realise the potential that the combination of *The Times* and Clipper can offer them," he said. "It will be a great promotional opportunity for the cities, but also a competitive and compelling sporting platform from which to take on their rivals across the country."

For more information on The Times Clipper 2000, telephone 01234 711550 or see the website at: www.clipper-ventures.com

HOCKEY

Reading survive big scare

By Sydney Friskin

MARK PEARN pulled Reading out of a tight corner in the preliminary round of the indoor club championship yesterday with a brilliant sequence of four goals in a 6-3 victory over Old Loughtonians in a vital pool B match. The result assured Reading, the holders, of their place in finals night at Crystal Palace on February 5.

By the end of play on Saturday, Reading were in crisis. A 6-5 defeat by Southgate and a 5-5 draw against Norton caused panic that was somewhat allayed by the 10-3 defeat of Firebrands, to which Pearn contributed three goals. Four more goals by Pearn laid the foundation for a 7-4 victory over Loughborough Students yesterday morning — a success that enabled Reading to face Old Loughtonians with renewed confidence.

Old Loughtonians, however, finished on top of the pool having won all of their four earlier matches, Jennings scoring three of their goals in the 9-7 victory over Southgate, who themselves qualified for finals night — at the expense of Loughborough on goal difference — after trouncing Firebrands 11-2.

There was less tension in pool A, which was reduced to five teams after the withdrawal of West London Institute of Higher Education. East Grinstead, the runners-up last year, won all four of their matches and will be joined at Crystal Palace by Barford Tigers and Hull. The best of the skirmishes here was the match between East Grinstead and Barford, which East Grinstead won 4-2. Mills scored twice for East Grinstead, with Mahmood Bhatti and Byfield adding to the score. Amarjit Degun and Jimmy Singh were on target for Barford.

Loughborough Students were scheduled to switch outside and play away at Bowdon in the fourth round of the EHA Cup yesterday, but the tie was postponed — for a second time — because of a frozen pitch. Cannock, the holders, had little difficulty in defeating Harrogate 6-0 a day earlier to set up a fifth-round home match against Old Georgians on Sunday. Crutchley scored twice with Sharpe, Edwards, Parnham and Terrett adding further goals.

Holwell marks return

By Cathy Harris

THE rearranged EHA Women's Cup fourth-round ties were hit by another spell of icy weather, with only Clifton, the holders, and Leicester booking their places in the next round. For Slough and Hightown, both former winners, it will have to be a case of third time lucky.

The prospect of a second day of heavy frost on the pitch at Blackburn saw Slough's tie against the non-league club postponed for a second time. Sue Chandler, the Slough captain, said that her team was reluctant to make another futile journey up the motorway and was happy when it was postponed on Saturday evening. She said that they would probably play the fixture on February 7, the day after a league match away to Hightown.

On Merseyside, Hightown made two abortive attempts to play Sherwood. After play was called off at the original venue, Formby, because of a frosty pitch, the teams moved to the Northern Club in Crosby, where play was possible until minutes into the second half, when the surface was deemed to be too dangerous to continue.

A spokesman for Hightown said that the clubs had agreed to replay the game on February 7 at a neutral venue, probably in Cheshire, to avoid Sherwood having to travel a long distance yet again.

Further south, Sue Holwell, the former England and Great Britain defender, celebrated her return to the Leicester squad when she scored a hat-trick of penalty corner goals to steer them to a 5-1 win against Sheffield. Justine Williams scored one in each half, with Sue Catton scoring in the 47th minute for Sheffield with their only corner of the match.

There were few problems for Clifton, who saw off Dulwich's challenge by a similar margin. Missing Tammy Miller, their captain, who is injured, and Claire Burr and Lucy Newcombe, who were unavailable, Clifton took the lead through Juliet Rayden in the sixth minute. Denise Marston-Smith and Isabel Palmer scored a brace apiece to complete the scoreline, with Louise Parker adding a last-minute consolation goal.

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GUIDE TO THE WEEK AHEAD

TODAY

RUGBY UNION

Welsh Challenge Trophy Pool A
Neath v Natal Wildebeest (7.0)

AIB LEAGUE: Second division: Ballynahinch v Malone (7.0)

TOMORROW

FOOTBALL

FA CUP: Third-round replays: Barnsley v Swindon (7.45), Notts County v Sheffield Utd (7.45), Yeovil v Cardiff (7.45)

AUTO WINDSCREENS SHIELD: Northern section: Second round: Hartlepool v Preston, Darlington v Chesterfield (7.45), Wigan v Scarborough (7.45), Rochdale v Stoke (7.45)

SCOTTISH LEAGUE: First division: Hamilton v Clydebank (7.45). **Third division:** Berwick v Montrose (7.30), Cowdenbeath v Brechin (7.30), Queen's Park v Stenhousemuir (7.30). **Second division:** Forfar v Clyde (7.30), Livingston v East Fife (7.30)

RUGBY UNION

SWALEC CUP: Fourth round: Group B: Cross Keys v Dunvant (7.30). **Group L:** Llandovery v Cardiff (7.30)

WEDNESDAY

FOOTBALL

FA CUP: Third-round replays: Fulham v Southampton (7.45), Leeds v Rushden and Diamonds (7.45); Swansea v West Ham (7.45)

RUGBY UNION

WELSH CHALLENGE TROPHY: Pool A: Caerphilly v Edinburgh Reivers (7.15). **Pool B:** Bridgend v Glasgow Caledonians (7.15)

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Newcastle Eagles v Milton Keynes Lions (7.0). **Uni-ball Trophy: Group A:** Thames Valley Tigers v Leicester Riders (8.0)

ICE HOCKEY: Sekonda Superleague: London Knights v Manchester Storm (7.0)

THURSDAY

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Greater London Leopards v Derby Storm (7.30)

ICE HOCKEY: Sekonda Superleague: Cardiff Devils v Nottingham Panthers (7.30)

FRIDAY

FOOTBALL

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE: Second division: Colchester v Wrexham (7.45). **Third division:** Chester v Brighton (7.45)

RUGBY UNION

WELSH CHALLENGE TROPHY: Pool A: Aberavon v Canada (7.0). **Pool B:** Newport v Romania (7.0)

SATURDAY

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.0

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: Chelsea v Coventry, Derby v Blackburn, Leeds v Middlesbrough, Leicester v Manchester Utd, Liverpool v Southampton, Nottingham Forest v Arsenal, Tottenham v Wimbledon, West Ham v Sheffield Wednesday.

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE: First division: Barnsley v Birmingham, Bradford v Crewe, Bristol City v Tranmere, Bury v Queens Park Rangers, Crystal Palace v Stockport, Grimsby v Oxford Utd, Norwich v West Bromwich, Port Vale v Swindon, Portsmouth v Huddersfield, Sheffield Utd v Bolton, Wolverhampton v Watford. **Second division:** Bournemouth v Notts County, Burnley v Chesterfield, Gillingham v York, Macclesfield v Stoke, Manchester City v Fulham, Northampton v Walsall, Oldham v Blackpool, Preston v Luton, Reading v Bristol Rovers, Wigan v Lincoln, Wycombe v Millwall. **Third division:** Brentford v Halifax, Carlisle v Scunthorpe, Chester v Brighton, Darlington v Hull, Hartlepool v Barnet, Peterborough v Cardiff, Plymouth v Mansfield, Rotherham v Leyton Orient, Scarborough v Exeter, Shrewsbury v Southend, Swansea v Cambridge Utd, Torquay v Rochdale

FOOTBALL CONFERENCE: Barrow v Welling, Doncaster v Morecambe, Leek v Hayes

SCOTTISH LEAGUE: First division: Ayr v Airdrie, Clydebank v St Mirren, Falkirk v Greenock Morton, Hibernian v Hamilton, Stranraer v Raith. **Second division:** Alloa v Livingston, Clyde v Inverness CT, Forfar v Stirling Albion, Arbroath. **Third division:** Albion v Cowdenbeath, Berwick v Stenhousemuir, East Stirling v Queen's Park, Montrose v Dumbarton, Ross County v Brechin

RUGBY UNION

Kick-off 2.30 unless stated

ALLIED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP: First division: Bath v Newcastle (3.0), Bedford v Sale (3.0), Gloucester v Richmond (4.15), Harlequins v Northampton (3.0), Leicester v London Scottish (3.0), London Irish v West Hartlepool (3.0). **Second division:** Bristol v Rotherham (3.30), London Welsh v Waterloo (2.0), Orrell v Moseley (3.0), [illegible] v Coventry (2.15), Rugby v Exeter (3.0)

JEWSON NATIONAL LEAGUE: First division: Birmingham Solihull v Wharfedale, Liverpool St Helens v Harrogate, Lydney v Henley (3.0), Newbury v Morley (3.0), Otley v [illegible] (2.15), Reading v Nottingham (2.15), Rosslyn Park v Manchester. **Second division north:** Hinckley v Aspatria, Kendal v Sedgley Park (2.15), Lichfield v Sheffield, New Brighton v Stourbridge (2.15), Preston Grasshoppers v Walsall (2.15), Sandal v Nuneaton (2.15), Whitchurch v Winnington Park. **Second division south:** Bridgwater v North Walsham (3.0), Clifton v Barking, Havant v Esher, Met Police v Plymouth (3.0), Norwich v Bracknell (2.15), Redruth v Weston-super-Mare, Tabard v Cheltenham (2.15)

WELSH CHALLENGE TROPHY: Pool A: Pontypridd v Natal Wildebeest. **Pool B:** Ebbw Vale v Blue Bulls

WELSH LEAGUE: First divison: Sumaen v Treorchy, Cross Keys v Dunvant, Merthyr v Aberavon, Newbridge v Blackwood, Rumney v Llandovery, South Wales Police v Pontypool, Tondu v Maesteg, UWIC v Tredegar

TENNENTS VELVET PREMIERSHIP: First division: Currie v West of Scotland (2.0), Glasgow Hawks v Stirling County (2.0), Jed-Forest v Boroughmuir (2.0), Melrose v Heriot's FP (2.0), Watsonians v Hawick (2.0). **Second division:** Dundee HSFP v Gala (2.0), Edinburgh Accies v Biggar (2.0), Kilmarnock v Aberdeen GSFP (2.0), Kirkcaldy v Kelso (2.0), Selkirk v Musselburgh (2.0)

AIB LEAGUE: First division: Clontarf v Young Munster, Cork Constitution v Buccaneers, Galwegians v Ballymena, Shannon v Lansdowne, St Marys v Blackrock College, Terenure v Garryowen

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Birmingham Bullets v Chester Jets (7.0), Leicester Riders v Derby Storm (7.30), London Towers v Worthing Bears (7.30), Manchester Giants v Sheffield Sharks (7.0), *Thames Valley Tigers v Greater London Leopards (8.0).*

BOXING: European lightweight title: W Schwer (holder, Luton) v A Maynard (Birmingham) (at York Hall, Bethnal Green)

ICE HOCKEY: Sekonda Superleague: Ayr Scottish Eagles v Manchester Storm (6.30), Nottingham Panthers v Newcastle Riverkings (7.0), Sheffield Steelers v London Knights (7.0)

SUNDAY

FOOTBALL

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: Charlton v Newcastle (4.0).

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE: First division: Sunderland v Ipswich (1.0)

SCOTTISH LEAGUE: Second division: East Fife v Queen of South (3.0)

FA WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE CUP: Third round: Arsenal v Croydon (2.0).

RUGBY UNION

ALLIED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP: Second division: Blackheath v Worcester (3.0), Leeds v Fylde (2.30).

WELSH CHALLENGE TROPHY: Pool A: Neath v Georgia (2.30). **Pool B:** Llanelli v Gauteng Falcons (2.30)

OTHER SPORT

ATHLETICS: *Reebok Cardiff Cross Challenge*

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: *Chester Jets v Thames Valley Tigers (5.30);* Edinburgh Rocks v Newcastle Eagles (5.0); Milton Keynes Lions v Birmingham Bullets (4.0), Sheffield Sharks v London Towers (4.0)

ICE HOCKEY: Sekonda Superleague: Bracknell Bees v London Knights (6.0), Manchester Storm v Cardiff Devils (5.0).

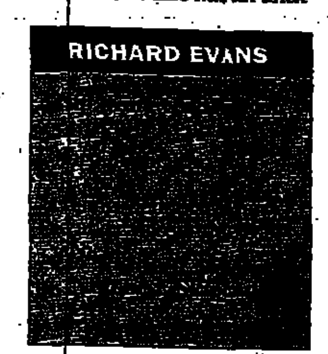
RACING: FIRST-SEASON TRAINER KEEPS CHELTENHAM FESTIVAL OPTIONS OPEN FOR SMART HURDLER

Behrajan helps Daly deliver early success

By Richard Evans, Racing Correspondent

THE cry of most first-season trainers is invariably akin to that of Richard II when he uttered the immortal line about swapping his kingdom for a decent nag. Henry Daly is a fortunate exception to the rule.

When he took over from Captain Tim Forster at Downton Hall Stables in Shropshire last summer, not only did he inherit an enviable collection of proven and promising chasers, along with a group of loyal owners, he also had an unexpected bonus in the shape of a promise made a dozen years earlier.


RICHARD EVANS

In the mid-1980s, Daly and Simon Marsh, now racing manager to the Lloyd Webbers were working in Lexington, the heart of the American bloodstock industry, and, after a particularly enjoyable dinner, Marsh promised that if Daly's ambition to become a trainer materialised he would get together a group of friends and send him a horse.

At a drinks party during Royal Ascot last summer, Marsh bumped into Daly, who had just announced he was taking over from Forster, and the promise of yesteryear was put into action.

The result was that Anthony Bromley, right-hand man to David Minton at the British Bloodstock Agency, bought an Aga Khan cast-off, by Arazi out of a Mill Reef mare. The highlight of his Flat career had been to get within 13 lengths of Sagamix, subsequent winner of the Arc, over a mile and a half in France.

The purchase price was £10,000, shared by a decidedly upmarket syndicate of owners consisting of Johnny Weatherby, chairman of Weatherbys and a trustee of Ascot, Lady Lloyd Webber, Mark Wiggin, owner of Downton Hall, and Rupert, his younger brother, and Jeremy Graham, along with Marsh and Daly.

Behrajan offered no early indications of great talent and when he went to Warwick for his hurdling debut three weeks ago, Daly would have been delighted if he had finished in the first six. Not surprisingly, he went unbacked that day — and duly whistled in by 14 lengths at 20-1.

Next stop was Sandown on Saturday, where the four-year-old was entered for two races: a competitive juvenile hurdle and the high-class Tolworth Hurdle in which Hidebound would be a strongly fancied short-priced favourite.

Daly opted for the latter, in which his runner would receive a handy weight allowance, and, in keeping with the Forster school of pessimism, thought at best he would pick up some useful place money. This time the winning distance was 16 lengths and a starting price of 9-2.

Daly, 32, spent time with Paul Cole and Kim Bailey before joining Forster in 1991 and is a trainer with a big future. After not rushing his horses early in the season, his patience is paying dividends and winners are flowing.

Behrajan is 10-1 second favourite for the Triumph Hurdle, but Daly said yesterday: "He doesn't really give the impression of being a Triumph type. He's a huge horse, about 16.3. I might enter him for the Triumph, the Supreme Novices' and the SunAlliance and then decide. But it is a nice problem to have."

What may not prove so easy will be gauging the reaction of his great mentor to having a leading fancy for a hurdle race in the yard. The Captain, a chasing man through and through, regarded hurdling as a necessary evil.

"I would not have thought that when he handed the licence over to me, having the second favourite for the Triumph would have been at the top of his list," Daly said.

Tony McCoy was banned for six days (January 18-23 inclusive) after falling foul of the whip rules again at Sandown on Saturday. He was found to have hit Eudipe below the quarters as he drove him to a length defeat of Glitter Isle in the Mildmay, Cazalet Chase. McCoy was suspended for two days, but a deferred four-day ban was also triggered.

Leicester card in doubt

THE meeting at Leicester tomorrow hinges on a 3pm inspection today, although course officials described the meeting as having a "fighting chance" of going ahead.

Recent heavy rain has left parts of the hurdle track waterlogged, but the head groundsman, Jimmy Stevenson, said: "The hurdles course is waterlogged in places but it has improved slightly."

Fakenham today looks set to beat the weather despite a frost on Saturday. David Hunter, clerk of the course, said: "I'm pretty confident we will be OK." Prospects for Fontwell were described as "very good" by the track's chief executive, Jonathan Garratt.

JULIAN HERBERT / ALLSPORT


Behrajan on the way to victory at Sandown on Saturday

Archive Footage shrugs off weight of history

By Our Irish Racing Correspondent

ARCHIVE FOOTAGE, sent off at 25-1, gave jockey David Evans ample compensation for missing out on last year's Ladbroke winner, Graphic Equaliser, when taking the big race on Saturday in a finish dominated by outsiders.

His weight-carrying performance equalled that of Bambrook Again, who also won under 11st 8lb, and he finished nine lengths clear of the 40-1 shot Daraheen Chief, with Its Time For A Win (25-1) four lengths third.

It was the biggest success for Evans, 30, who was riding just the 56th winner of his career. Last season he lost out when Graphic Equaliser was switched from Frank Lacy's yard to Arthur Moore's, but this time luck was with him.

Dermot Weld, the trainer of Archive Footage, said: "Tony McCoy was to ride but found out on Tuesday that he couldn't. I'm delighted for David, who is a great worker and team player."

Weld, who saddled Archive Footage's dam, Trusted Partner, to win the 1988 Irish 1,000 Guineas, rated his runner no forlorn hope despite the price. "I think I said he would run in the first four but when the weights went up I was more hopeful than confident," Weld added. He now plans to tackle the County Hurdle at Cheltenham in March.

Evans said: "He was always travelling well. Coming to the third last I thought I could win because I hadn't expected to be that close three out. Usually I'm sitting in the jockey's room having finished fifth or sixth and saying I've run a blinder."

Polar Prospect finished best of the three British-trained runners in fifth, with Sadler's Realm, also trained by Philip Hobbs, eleventh and New Inn, trained by Steve Gollings, last of the 24 finishers. The favourites never figured. Impulsive Dream finished towards the rear, as did Advocat, whose rider, Paul Carberry, said: "The ground was too sticky."

The Midlands National at Uttoxeter is now an option for Hollybank Buck, who won a gruelling Pierse Leopardstown Handicap Chase under a fine ride from Norman Williamson. The Tony Martin-trained gelding overhauled Roundwood by half a length.

BIG-RACE DETAILS

1.45 PIERSE LEOPARDSTOWN HANDICAP CHASE (£22,750: 3m)
1, **HOLLYBANK BUCK** N Williamson, 7-1
2, **Roundwood** G Cotter 12-1
3, **Glebe Lad** T P Rudd, 12-1
Rynane (4th), Wylde Hide, 4-1 jt-favs. 14 ran. ½l, 12l. A J Martin in Ireland. Tote £5.70, £1.90, £3.50, £4.10. DF £41.60. CSF £80.76. Tricast £922.68. Trio £248.30

2.20 THE 13TH LADBROKE (Handicap hurdle £48,975: 2m)
1, **ARCHIVE FOOTAGE** D T Evans, 25-1
2, **Daraheen Chief** Mr J McNamara, 40-1
3, **Its Time For A Win** G Cotter, 25-1
4, **Palette** R Walsh, 16-1
Advocat, Impulsive Dream 8-1 jt-favs. 25 ran. 9l, 4l, hd. D K Weld in Ireland. Tote £46.30, £7.80, £7.60, £7.50, £4.50. DF £3,302.30 (paid out on 1st and 3rd). Trifecta £5737.20 (0.34 winning tickets. Pool of £5172.03 carried forward to 2.50 Southwell today). CSF £723.90. Tricast £20,192.08.

FONTWELL

THUNDERER
1.0 Damp Course
1.0 Bright Flame
2.0 Indian Tracker
2.30 Dancetillyoudrop
3.00 Shahrur
3.30 CHIPPEWA (nap)
4.00 The Hill Has Moved
Timekeeper's top rating: 2.00 SKIPCARL.

GOING: SOFT — SIS

1.0 JESP NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE
(£3,06 2m 2f 110yd) (15 runners)

1 2121 HOMME DE FER 16 (F,S) (Miss M Vencatagadoo) K Bailey 7-12-3 Mr R Forristal (5)
2 35- CALDAMUS 293 (P Warwick) Mrs M Jones 7-11-5 T J Murphy —
3 4 CAMDEN ROAD 39 (Coldharbour Racing Ltd) Miss S Edwards 6-11-5 L Aspell 50
4 6-304 DAMP COURSE 23 (G M Powell) N Twiston-Davies 6-11-5 C Llewellyn 79
5 P- EDITORIAL 410 (Mrs P Cooper) R Rowe 7-11-5 R Dunwoody —
6 -0 LARKUS AURELIUS 68 (Chamberlain Addiscott Pines) O Sherwood 6-11-5 J Osborne —
7 60X3 LOOK SHARPER 91 (Against All Odds Partnership) R Buckler 6-11-5 B Powell 64
8 0 MAINLIER 55 (G Spencer) M Pipe 6-11-5 C Maude —
9 05 BONNET 32 (B Hicks) R Curtis 5-11-0 J Leech —
10 / CLAN ROSS 880 (D Tye) P Ritchens 8-11-0 S Fox —
11 6I ELMSIDE 13 (BF) (P Masters) M Pipe 6-11-0 A P McCoy —
12 1 FOREST FLORA 60 (New Forest Racing Partnership) J Mullins 5-11-0 B Clifford —
13 6P4 GENTLE BREEZE 431 (D Trangmar) J Gifford 7-11-0 P Hide —
14 3/2 KERRY'S OATS 23 (J Whelan) P Hedger 7-11-0 M Richards —
15 NEWLANDS GIRL 28 (E Savage) P Hedger 6-11-0 T Dascombe —

BETTING: 5-Homme De Fer, 6-1 Elmside, 7-1 Damp Course, 8-1 Camden Road, Larkus Aurelius, Look Sharper, 16-Mainlier, 20-1 others.

1998: NO CORRESPONDING RACE

Homme De Fer beat Forever Noble 8l in 15-runner novice hurdle at Hereford (2m 3f 110yd, good). Caldamus 13l 5th of 16 to Rio's King in national hunt flat race at Chepstow (2m 110yd, good). Camden Road 21l 4th of 14 to Cooper Ch in novice hurdle at Windsor (2m, good to soft). Damp Course 13l 4th of 20 to Windross in novice hurdle at Warwick (3m 3f, soft) with Kerry's Oats (levels) 59l 10th. Larkus Aurelius beaten a distance last of 10 to Fu'baby in national hunt flat race at Newton Abbot (2m 1f, soft). Look Sharper 13l 3rd of 12 to Mazileo in novice hurdle at Newton Abbot (2m 1f, good to firm). Mainlier 26l 7th of 15 to Gunnerblong in national hunt flat race at Newton Abbot (2m 1f, good to soft). Bonnet 14l 5th of 12 to Happy Hussar in national hunt flat race at Ludlow (2m, good to soft). Elmside 14l 4th of 12 to Crack Shot in mares national hunt flat at Taunton (2m 1f, good to soft). Forest Flora 23l 7th of 11 to Forgotten Hero in national hunt flat race at Taunton (2m 1f, good) with Bonnet (levels) 36l 10th. Gentle Breeze 19l 6th of 9 to Coolsiquay in mares novice hurdle at Towcester (2m, good to soft).

DAMP COURSE can make the most of the 12lb he receives from Homme De Fer

1.30 FULLERTON & COLEMAN NOVICES CHASE
(£2,803: 3m 110yd) (8 runners)

1 16-521 DRUM BATTLE 16 (F,G,S) (D Chown) W G M Turner 7-11-9 R Dunwoody
2 1223-0 BRIGHT FLAME 79 (S) (Coldharbour Racing) Miss S Edwards 7-11-3 O Burrows (5) —
3 -PPP40 FOREVER DREAMING 13 (V,S) (Mrs M Henson) S Mellor 8-11-3 C Webb 55
4 P1/PP ROYAL TOMMY 16 (B,S) (L Kimber) O Sherwood 7-11-3 J Osborne —
5 20P4-3 STRONG TEL 14 (S) (T Neill) M Pipe 9-11-3 A P McCoy 56
6 1-24P3 BALLY LIRA 26 (D,S) (V Thorne) P Rodford 7-10-12 S Burrough 104
7 35-606 BAYWYN 12 (S) (M Churches) M Churches 8-10-12 Mr J Young (7) 22
8 PP-543 DUSNICKS COUNTRY 10 (C Tizzard) C Tizzard 9-10-12 C Maude 86

BETTING: 5-4 Strong Tel, 11-8 Drum Battle, 10-1 Bally Lira, 14-1 Bright Flame, 16-1 Royal Tommy, Dusnicks Country, 25-1 Forever Dreaming, 66-1 Baywyn.

1998: KILMINGTON 8-11-9 P Hide (3-1) J Gifford 10 ran

Drum Battle beat Spring Saint 6l in 8-runner novice chase at Hereford (3m 1f 110yd, good) with Royal Tommy (6lb better off) pulled up. Bright Flame 50l 7th of 14 to Lord Khalice in handicap hurdle at Market Rasen (3m, good). Forever Dreaming 84l 10th of 13 to Scotton Green in novice handicap chase at Haydock (3m, soft). Strong Tel 13l 3rd of 7 to Potentate in novice chase at Chepstow (2m 3f 110yd, soft). Bally Lira beaten a distance 3rd of 12 to Gola Drum in handicap chase at Bangor (4m 1f, soft). Baywyn beaten a distance 6th of 7 to Tiraldo in novice chase at Stratford (2m 5f 110yd, heavy). Dusnicks Country 35l 3rd of 10 to Holdimclose in novice chase at Exeter (2m 7f 110yd, heavy).

STRONG TEL will be hard to beat if staying this longer trip

2.00 DOCKERHUGHES MEMORIAL CHALLENGE TROPHY NOVICES HURDLE
(£2,548: 2m 6f 110yd) (12 runners)

1 50-1P FLAMENGO 11 (G) (Mrs M Bell) O Sherwood 6-11-12 J Osborne 63
2 F1-231 JIM JAM JOEY 11 (CD,S) (Hon Mrs C Yeates) D Grissell 6-11-12 J Goldstein (5) 82
3 211-21 SKIPCARL 25 (S) (J Sunley) Miss H Knight 7-11-7 J Culloty
4 /00-36 AMOTHEBAMBO 14 (Mrs M Sheridan) R Baker 6-11-6 G Shenkin (5) 42
5 00-0F BELOW THE SALT 13 (J Dunlop) J Dunlop 6-11-6 P Hide —
6 3-6P DAYBROOK RAMBLER 16 (Mrs D Jackson) P Winkworth 7-11-6 M Griffiths (5) 24
7 25-UF5 FOX RIDGE 40 (Coldharbour Racing Ltd) Miss S Edwards 7-11-6 L Aspell 68
8 5CP-P3 INDIAN TRACKER 23 (S) (J & J Richards) M Pipe 9-11-6 C Maude 79
9 6/00F/ BONITA BLAKENEY 664 (Mr & Mrs L Shack) G Balding 9-11-1 Mr R Arnold —
10 00-06 BUZZSWORD 16 (Mrs J Clemons) R Buckler 5-11-1 D O'Sullivan (7) —
11 634 JUST STEF 28 (Mrs C White) J Mullins 6-11-1 T J Murphy 74
12 P15- RIVER DIAMOND 232P (F) (W Gale) J Gifford 6-11-1 O Burrows (5) —

BETTING: 2-1 Skipcarl, 3-1 Indian Tracker, 6-1 Flamengo, Jim Jam Joey, 10-1 Amothebambo, 12-1 River Diamond, 16-1 Just Stef, 20-1 others.

1998: BRIGHT FLAME 6-11-6 L Aspell (20-1) Miss S Edwards 11 ran

Jim Jam Joey beat Fine Attitude 5l in 10-runner novice hurdle at Fontwell (2m 6f 110yd, heavy) with Flamengo (7lb better off) pulled up. Skipcarl beat Kenstord Tina ¾l in 11-runner mares novice hurdle at Exeter (2m 3f 110yd, soft). Amothebambo 4l 6th of 9 to Lyreen Wonder in novice hurdle at Chepstow (2m 110yd, soft). Below The Salt fell in novice hurdle at Taunton (2m 1f, good to soft); previously 42l 15th of 17 to Canasta in national hunt flat race at Huntingdon (2m 110yd, soft). Fox Ridge 23l 5th of 13 to Pier Less Hassle in novice hurdle at Plumpton (2m 4f, good to soft). Indian Tracker 13l 3rd of 20 to Windross in novice hurdle at Warwick (2m 3f, soft). Buzzsword beaten a distance 6th of 7 to My Tern in mares novice hurdle at Wincanton (2m, heavy). Just Stef 28l 4th of 12 to Santabless in novice hurdle at Plumpton (2m 4f, heavy).

SKIPCARL, a useful point-to-pointer in Ireland, is hard to oppose

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Wins	Rnrs	%
P Nicholls	25	52	48.1	X Aizpuru	4	8	50.0
M Pipe	24	89	27.0	J Osborne	12	40	30.0
R Buckler	18	72	25.0	A McCoy	36	135	26.7
P Ritchens	6	24	25.0	T J Murphy	14	55	25.5
D Gandolfo	6	27	22.2	R Dunwoody	14	64	21.9
D Williams	4	18	22.2	G Supple	4	19	21.1

2.30 WINTERSGILL & FAULKNER HANDICAP CHASE
(£3,526: 3m 2f 110yd) (6 runners)

1 11F0-P LUV-U-FRANK 37 (B,CD,F,G,S) (F Farrant) M Pipe 10-11-10 A P McCoy 118
2 PUP-26 NAZZARO 26 (B,CD,S) (Gongolfin) W G M Turner 10-11-3 R Dunwoody 110
3 /P-P52 JURASSIC CLASSIC 28 (CD,G,S) (B Seal) Mrs L Richards 12-10-13 M Richards 59
4 6-6045 EASTHORPE 30 (B,F,G,S) (M Broughton) Miss H Knight 11-10-11 J Culloty 119
5 2F-F2P DANCETILLYOUDROP 10 (S) (D Millard) P Nicholls 8-10-4 T J Murphy
6 3P33-3 HOLY STING 10 (D,S) (G MacEchern) J De Giles 10-10-0 Mr S Strange (7) 49

BETTING: 11-4 Nazzaro, 3-1 Easthorpe, 4-1 Luv-U-Frank, Jurassic Classic, 5-1 Dancetillyoudrop, 16-1 Holy Sting.

1998: MALWOOD CASTLE 8-11-0 A Thornton (9-2) R Alner 8 ran

Luv-U-Frank pulled up in chase at Sandown (3m 110yd, good); previously beaten a distance 7th of 12 to Paperising in novice handicap chase at Ayr (3m 1f, good). Nazzaro beaten a distance 6th of 12 to Golden Drum in handicap chase at Bangor (4m 1f, soft); previously 3l 2nd of 6 to Grosvenor in handicap chase at Fontwell (3m 2f 110yd, soft) with Jurassic Classic (11lb better off) pulled up. Jurassic Classic 8l 2nd of 7 to Kilmington in handicap chase at Plumpton (3m 1f 110yd, heavy). Easthorpe 28l 5th of 10 to Lord Of The West in handicap chase at Doncaster (3m 2f, good). Dancetillyoudrop pulled up in handicap chase at Exeter (2m 7f 110yd, heavy); previously 7l 2nd of 5 to Kinnahalla in handicap chase at Ludlow (3m 3f 110yd, good). Holy Sting beaten a distance 3rd of 5 to Shamagore Warrior in handicap chase at Plumpton (3m 1f 110yd, heavy).

LUV-U-FRANK, progressive last season, can bounce back after a disappointing reappearance

3.00 WEST SUSSEX HANDICAP HURDLE
(£5,917: 2m 2f 110yd) (8 runners)

1 -2126P DICTAMN 56 (G,S) (D Johnson) M Pipe 5-11-13 A P McCoy 117
2 4F-303 SHAHRUR 18 (CD,F,G,S) (Mrs E Kernan) G L Moore 6-11-3 M Batchelor (5)
3 341-41 CARACOL 16 (CD,G,S) (C Bolton) J Neville 10-10-3 T Siddall (5) 105
4 4-1112 HEART 24 (BF,S) (C & S Brasher) Miss H Knight 6-10-0 Mr S Strange (7) 115
5 041-40 THE NEWSMAN 82 (CD,G) (Coldharbour Racing) Miss S Edwards 7-10-0 L Aspell 122
6 3-3032 NORDANSK 11 (CD,F,S) (T Smith) M Madgwick 10-10-0 J Goldstein (5) 128
7 60-465 DANCING PADDY 34 (CD,F,G,S) (Bychance Racing) K C-Brown 11-10-0 S Kelly (5) 96
8 P3113- CHIEF PREDATOR 234 (F,S) (No Win No Feed Synd) D Williams 5-10-0 B Clifford 114

BETTING: 9-4 Shahrur, 11-4 Heart, 4-1 Caracol, 7-1 Dictamn, 10-1 Nordansk, 14-1 The Newsman, Dancing Paddy, Chief Predator.

1998: NO CORRESPONDING RACE

Dictamn pulled up in handicap hurdle at Leicester (2m, soft), previously 21l 6th of 10 to Mister Morose in handicap hurdle at Chepstow (2m 4f 110yd, good to soft). Shahrur 19l 3rd of 9 to Serenus in handicap hurdle at Kempton (2m, soft). Caracol beat Key Grip 12l in 7-runner handicap hurdle at Market Rasen (2m 3f 110yd, soft). Heart 3l 2nd of 4 to Handy Lass in mares handicap hurdle at Lingfield (2m 3f 110yd, heavy). The Newsman 42l last of 15 to Classic Eagle in handicap hurdle at Huntingdon (2m 110yd, good to firm). Nordansk 10l 2nd of 5 to Takeamemo in handicap hurdle at Fontwell (2m 2f 110yd, heavy). Dancing Paddy 30l 5th of 7 to King Of Thieves in handicap hurdle at Fontwell (2m 2f 110yd, heavy). Chief Predator 21l 3rd of 8 to The Full Monty in novice hurdle at Towcester (3m, good to firm).

SHAHRUR shaped as though returning to his best at Kempton and is sure to go well

3.30 M BOWEN CONSTRUCTION MAIDEN CHASE
(£2,965: 2m 3f) (9 runners)

1 1-368P BEARYS CROSS 11 (S) (Mrs C Paterson) R Hodges 7-11-5 T J Murphy —
2 52/52- KYBO'S REVENGE 483 (Exors late I Kernan) R Rowe 8-11-5 P Hide —
3 0PP-52 MERRY SHOT 10 (G) (R Hitchins) Mrs J Pitman 7-11-5 B Powell
4 121- MR MILLER 253P (S) (Pat & Peter Flaherty) T Casey 7-11-5 J Osborne —
5 FP234/ SIOUX TO SPEAK 585 (BF,S) (Sioux Pencs) Mrs L Richards 7-11-5 M Richards —
6 -0P000 SMART GUY 27 (Mrs P Donkin) Mrs L Jewell 7-11-5 T Peoples (7) —
7 /312/5 SWANSEA GOLD 10 (B,S) (Ms Hilary Handel) P Hobbs 8-11-0 Mr D O'Meara (7) —
8 -55042 ORIENTAL STYLE 10 (V) (Style Partners) G Balding 5-10-8 F Keniry (7) —
9 0F4-35 CHIPPEWA 11 (The Dionysus Partnership) M Pipe 5-10-3 A P McCoy —

BETTING: 7-4 Chippewa, 2-1 Merry Shot, 8-1 Kybo's Revenge, Mr Miller, 10-1 Oriental Style, 14-1 others.

1998: CALLING WILD 8-11-5 T J Murphy (2-1 fav) P Nicholls 11 ran

Bearys Cross pulled up in novice handicap chase at Fontwell (3m 2f 110yd, heavy), previously 40l 6th of 16 to Head Gardener in novice selling hurdle at Chepstow (2m 4f 110yd, good). Kybo's Revenge 10l 2nd of 5 to Forest Musk in novice hurdle at Fontwell (2m 6f 110yd, good to firm). Merry Shot 6l 2nd of 5 to Hang'em Out To Dry in novice handicap chase at Leicester (2m 1f, good to soft). Sioux To Speak 25l 4th of 11 to Magical Blues in novice handicap hurdle at Hereford (2m 3f 110yd, good to firm). Smart Guy 55l last of 12 to Zafarelli in novice handicap hurdle at Folkestone (2m 1f 110yd, heavy). Swansea Gold beaten a distance 5th of 10 to Holdimclose in novice chase at Exeter (2m 7f 110yd, heavy), previously ½l 2nd of 10 to Aller Moor in hunter chase at Stratford (3m, good). Oriental Style 2½l 2nd of 7 to Luscombe in novice handicap hurdle at Exeter (2m 1f 110yd, heavy). Chippewa 21l 5th of 19 to Premier Generation in novice hurdle at Warwick (2m, soft).

MERRY SHOT is best of those with experience over fences

4.00 WEATHERBYS STARS OF TOMORROW NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE
(£1,814: 2m 2f 110yd) (18 runners)

1 -00- BREITHORN PIPER 251 (A Clapperton) D Gandolfo 6-11-5 R Massey 26
2 CEDAR FLAG (R O S Racing) R O'Sullivan 5-11-5 L Aspell —
3 5 COLD CLASS 27 (Tomorrows Easy Partnership) D Grissell 6-11-5 J Goldstein (5) 66
4 0 FIOLINO 31 (J Dunlop) J Dunlop 6-11-5 Mr H Dunlop (7) —
5 GAMBIT (Mrs Tichy Williams) P Winkworth 6-11-5 M Griffiths (5) —
6 GRANDPA MAURICE (Islands Racing Connection) R Baker 5-11-5 G Shenkin (5) —
7 P- HOBNOB 295P (P Green) M Pipe 6-11-5 Guy Lewis (3) —
8 JOSAMERIC (J Roper) D Duggan 5-11-5 H Oliver (5) —
9 0 LABULA BAY 55 (B Bartlett) C Popham 5-11-5 O McPhail (5) —
10 300/ SIR PRIZE 674 (C Cornwell) R Rowe 6-11-5 A Garrity (7) —
11 P-45 THE HILL HAS MOVED 68 (BF) (H Catherwood) P Hobbs 6-11-5 R Widger (5) —
12 06 TWO PADDIES 11 (N Benstead) L Wells 6-11-5 W Greatrex (7)
13 0 ALICE SUNRISE 13 (Mrs J Greed) S Knight 5-11-0 Mr T Greed —
14 ANNA KARNALI (Mrs D Jacks) M Pipe 6-11-0 G Supple (3) —
15 FINAL CHANCE (L Tizzard) C Tizzard 5-11-0 Mr S Stronge (7) —
16 MONOCKY (Treberth Partnership) Mrs L Stubbs 4-10-7 Mr C Bonner —
17 GRAN CLICQUOT (F Gray) F Gray 4-10-2 M Batchelor (5) —
18 PERTEMPS CINDRELLA (G Duckhaven Stud) A D Smith 4-10-2 X Aizpuru (3) —

BETTING: 11-10 Anna Karnali, 7-2 The Hill Has Moved, 8-1 Fiolino, 10-1 Hobnob, 12-1 Two Paddies, 20-1 Grandpa Maurice, 25-1 Cedar Flag, Cold Class, Gambit, Josameric, Sir Prize, Final Chance, 33-1 others.

1998: COMMANCHE HERO 5-11-5 X Aizpuru (8-1) R Dickin 17 ran

Breithorn Piper 29l 13th of 18 to Papel's Cloggs in maiden flat hunt flat at Exeter (2m 2f, good). Cedar Flag Jareer gelding out of Sasha Lea. Cold Class 25l 5th of 12 to No Forecast in national hunt flat race at Folkestone (2m 1f 110yd, heavy). Fiolino 35l 14th of 18 to Baccarat in national hunt flat race at Doncaster (2m 110yd, good). Grandpa Maurice Astronef gelding, half-brother to flat and hurdles winner Sense Of Value. Hobnob Glacial Storm gelding out of Lepida. Labula Bay beaten a distance 13th of 15 to Gunnerblong in national hunt flat race at Newton Abbot (2m 1f, good to soft). Sir Prize 23l 11th of 20 to Billy Box in national hunt flat race at Sandown (2m 110yd, good). The Hill Has Moved 5¼l 5th of 15 to Diamond Strike in maiden national hunt flat at Fairyhouse (2m 2f, good to soft). Two Paddies 13l 6th of 20 to Perk Alert in national hunt flat race at Warwick (2m, soft). Alice Sunrise 89l 11th of 12 to Crack Shot in mares national hunt flat at Taunton (2m 1f, good to soft). Anna Karnali Gunner B mare, sister to the promising chaser, Red Marauder.

THE HILL HAS MOVED can come out best in a weak contest

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Fakenham: 1.40 Manor Mieo. Fontwell Park: 1.30 Forever Dreaming, Royal Tommy 2.30 Luv-U-Frank. Southwell: 12.50 E B Treasure. 1.20 Shontaine. 1.50 Taz Mania. 2.20 Ring The Rafters. 2.50 Slip Jig. 3.20 Alana's Cavalier.

SOUTHWELL

THUNDERER
12.20 High Noon. 12.50 Oxbane. 1.20 Pleasure Trick. 1.50 Westside Flyer. 2.20 Belisario. 2.50 Count De Money. 3.20 Golden Syrup. 3.50 Live Project.

GOING: STANDARD — TOTE JACKPOT MEETING
DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE — SIS

12.20 TIPPERARY APPRENTICES HANDICAP
(Div I: £1,658: 1m) (16 runners)

101 020- HOH NAVIGATOR 20 D Ffrench Davis 4-10-0 P Cleary (5) 13
102 000- FOREST ROBIN 23 (D,F) Mrs L Stubbs 6-9-7 Kristin Stubbs (7) 2
103 500- LUCKY MYST 83 C Brittain 4-9-5 N Esler (7) 16
104 05-5 KINGCHIP BOY 9 (V,CD,F,G) M Ryan 10-9-5 J Gotobed 4
105 41-3 HIGH NOON 6 (BF,D) N Littmoden 4-9-4 R Thomas (5) 12
106 420- GINNER MORRIS 21 (BF) C Booth 4-9-1 David O'Neill (3) 8
107 008- DANKA 24 K Comerford 5-8-12 L Newman (7) 6
108 352- ADIRPOUR 33 R Hollinshead 5-8-11 P M Quinn 5
109 000- AMINGTON GIRL 24 (V,D,G) P Evans 4-8-8 D Williams 14
110 04-0 FAR-SO-LA 6 (F) Mrs L Jewell 4-8-7 N Morris (7) 15
111 /00- SANDMOOR DENIM 41 (CD,F,G,S) S Bowring 12-8-4 S Finnamore (3) 11
112 304- RING THE CHIEF 16 (C,S) M Usher 7-8-4 G Hannon 9
113 00P- DARAJAT 151 J Portman 4-8-3 P Wright (7) 10
114 00-0 MEZZORAMIO 7 (B,CD,F) K Morgan 7-8-2 J Bosley (5) 3
115 00-0 JAZZY 9 J Norton 4-7-13 M Mathers (5) 7
116 000- LINGUISTIC DANCER 77 A Newcombe 4-7-12 C Catlin (7) 1

7-2 High Noon, 5-1 Kingchip Boy, 6-1 Ginner Morris, 7-1 Hoh Navigator, 8-1 Forest Robin, 10-1 Danka, Adirpour, 12-1 others.

12.50 TIPPERARY APPRENTICES HANDICAP
(Div II: £1,658: 1m) (16)

201 435- CAUDILLO 164 (D,S) Miss G Kelleway 6-9-13 J Gotobed 6
202 00-0 TYPHOON EIGHT 9 (G) D Nicholls 7-9-5 P Clarke 15
203 300- FEEL A LINE 110J (F,S) M Bielby 5-9-5 S Finnamore (3) 9
204 405/ SAFECRACKER 26J (B,F) T Etherington 6-9-4 J Savage (5) 3
205 35-4 TILAAL 9 M Hammond 7-9-3 W Hutchinson (5) 2
206 435- GAIN LINE 161 (F) K Bell 6-8-13 G Hannon 5
207 38-1 TOM 9 (V,CD) C Fairhurst 4-8-11 D Williams 7
208 000- EXPLOSIVE POWER 23 G Bravery 8-8-8 DOUBTFUL 10
209 03/0 ROAR ON TOUR 9 (CD,F,G) Mrs P Sly 10-8-7 P Hanagan (7) 16
210 080- MOONLIGHT FLIT 82 (B,F) J Eyre 4-8-7 M Mathers (5) 11
211 06-0 BORN A LADY 9 (B,C) N Littmoden 6-8-4 R Thomas (5) 12
212 00-0 PRINCIPAL BOY 9 (CD,G,S) Miss J Craze 6-8-3 M Semple (5) 8
213 000- RESURRECTION 49 M Chapman 4-8-2 N Esler (7) 13
214 20-0 OXBANE 9 Mrs S Lamyman 5-8-1 J Bosley (5) 14
215 0/00 E B TREASURE 3 (B) N Bycroft 4-7-12 David O'Neill (3) 4
216 00-0 HIGHSPEED 9 (D,F,S) P Felgate 7-7-11 P M Quinn 1

3-1 Tom, 5-1 Tilaal, 11-2 Caudillo, 6-1 Gain Line, 12-1 others.

1.20 WICKLOW HANDICAP (Div I: £2,463: 7f) (11)

301 042/ BRANDON MAGIC 504 (D,G,S) D Nicholls 6-10-2 Alex Greaves 1
302 40-0 GODMERSHAM PARK 9 (CD) P Felgate 7-9-12 G Parkin 10
303 22-0 ARC 9 F Jordan 5-9-7 R Perham 2
304 34-3 THEATRE MAGIC 5 (BF,CD) D Shaw 6-9-7 N Pollard (3) 9
305 54-4 ELITE HOPE 7 (D,G) N Tinkler 7-9-5 R Studholme (5) 8
306 050- KUSTOM KIT KATE 227 (S) S Bowring 4-9-1 C Teague (3) 7
307 60-6 PLEASURE TRICK 3 (V,CD,F,G) Enrico Incisa 8-9-0 Kim Tinkler 5
308 000- SHONTAINE 21 (B,CD,F,G) M Johnston 6-8-13 J Fanning 11
309 50-6 ZALOTTO 9 (B,CD) M Bielby 5-8-4 T Williams 3
310 166- NORTH ARDAR 324 (CD,F,G) R Brotherton 9-8-0 F Norton 4
311 4-05 AWESOME VENTURE 3 (CD,S) M Chapman 9-7-12 S Righton (7) 6

9-2 Theatre Magic, 5-1 Arc, Pleasure Trick, 11-2 Elite Hope, 6-1 others.

1.50 LIMERICK CLAIMING STAKES (3-Y-O: £2,097: 6f) (14)

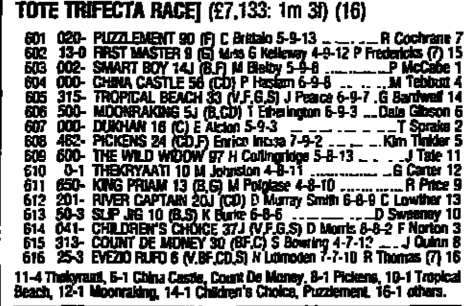
401 600- GOCHINOS 119 S C Williams 9-5 G Faulkner (3) 8
402 00-2 AMBER JASMINE 5 P Haslam 9-4 C Lowther 11
403 030- RISKY WAY 114 (G) B Rothwell 9-3 L Charnock 10
404 00-0 BANNINGHAM BREEZE 9 (B,D,F) D Nicholls 9-1 R Cochrane 1
405 602- KEEN HANDS 20 (V) Mrs N Macauley 9-1 R Price 3
406 000- JUST FOR YOU JANE 33 T Naughton 9-0 T Sprake 4
407 005- POKEIT 26 N Littmoden 8-9 J Tate 7
408 460- WESTSIDE FLYER 103 A Kelleway 8-8 D Sweeney 9
409 00-0 TAZ MANIA 9 (V) S Bowring 8-7 C Teague (3) 6
410 350- RED VENUS 51 J Berry 8-6 P Fessey 14
411 005- RISKY EXPERIENCE 15 (V) B Baugh 8-4 Dale Gibson 2
412 000- VEGA NEUTRAL 20 P Shakespeare 8-4 Emily Joyce (7) 13
413 000- WINDSTORM 103 H Morrison 8-4 C Rutter 12
414 006- MAID PLANS 26 N Littmoden 8-2 R Thomas (7) 5

5-2 Amber Jasmine, 4-1 Red Venus, 8-1 Risky Way, 10-1 others.

2.20 WATERFORD MAIDEN STAKES (£2,169: 1m 4f) (8)

501 4- A DAY ON THE DUB 62J D Eddy 6-9-3 R FitzPatrick (5) 1
502 BELISARIO 68J N Graham 5-9-3 A Clark 6
503 000- DUNSTON DURGAM 24 N Littmoden 5-9-3 J Tate 5
504 02-5 DUDLEY ALLEN 9 T Clement 4-8-13 J Lowe 2
505 063- LE SAUVAGE 24 D Barker 4-8-13 T Williams 3
506 000- RITUAL RUN 152 Ron Thompson 4-8-13 R Cochrane 4
507 00-2 BLUE HOPPER 7 M Quinn 5-8-12 Emily Joyce (7) 7
508 000- RING THE RAFTERS 24 (V) B Baugh 4-8-8 Dale Gibson 8

8-4 Blue Hopper, 7-2 Belisario, 5-1 Dudley Allen, 6-1 Le Sauvage, 7-1 others.



2.50 CORAL HANDICAP [SHOWCASE RACE AND TOTE TRIFECTA RACE] (£7,133: 1m 3f) (16)

601 020- PUZZLEMENT 90 (F) C Brittain 5-9-13 R Cochrane 7
602 13-0 FIRST MASTER 9 (G) Miss G Kelleway 4-9-12 P Fredericks (7) 15
603 002- SMART BOY 14J (B,F) M Bielby 5-9-8 P McCabe 1
604 000- CHINA CASTLE 56 (CD) P Haslam 6-9-8 M Tebbutt 4
605 315- TROPICAL BEACH 33 (V,F,G,S) J Pearce 6-9-7 G Bardwell 14
606 500- MOONRAKING 5J (B,CD) T Etherington 6-9-3 Dale Gibson 6
607 000- DUKHAN 16 (C) E Alston 5-9-3 T Sprake 2
608 462- PICKENS 24 (CD,F) Enrico Incisa 7-9-2 Kim Tinkler 5
609 600- THE WILD WIDOW 97 H Collingridge 5-8-13 J Tate 11
610 0-1 THEKRYAATI 10 M Johnston 4-8-11 G Carter 12
611 650- KING PRIAM 13 (B,G) M Polglase 4-8-10 R Price 9
612 201- RIVER CAPTAIN 20J (CD) D Murray Smith 6-8-9 C Lowther 13
613 50-3 SLIP JIG 10 (B,S) K Burke 6-8-6 D Sweeney 10
614 041- CHILDREN'S CHOICE 37J (V,F,G,S) D Morris 8-8-2 F Norton 3
615 313- COUNT DE MONEY 30 (BF,C) S Bowring 4-7-12 J Quinn 8
616 25-3 EVEZIO RUFO 6 (V,BF,CD,S) N Littmoden 7-7-10 R Thomas (7) 16

11-4 Thekryaati, 6-1 China Castle, Count De Money, 8-1 Pickens, 10-1 Tropical Beach, 12-1 Moonraking, 14-1 Children's Choice, Puzzlement, 16-1 others.

3.20 KERRY SELLING STAKES (3-Y-O: £1,872: 1m) (6)

1 40-0 ALANA'S CAVALIER 7 (B) R Hollinshead 9-0 P M Quinn (7) 4
2 03-6 BURTONS FOLLY 6 R Ingram 9-0 G Bardwell 6
3 04-1 GOLDEN SYRUP 7 (CD) P Howling 9-0 J Quinn 5
4 430- LA TAVERNETTA 20 (F) N Tinkler 9-0 Kim Tinkler 1
5 0-63 E B PEARL 3 (B) N Bycroft 8-9 S Drowne 2
6 056- SIMPSON'S DOMAIN 35 J S Moore 8-9 S Whitworth 3

11-8 Golden Syrup, 3-1 Burtons Folly, 9-2 La Tavernetta, 7-1 others.

3.50 WICKLOW HANDICAP (Div II: £2,463: 7f) (11)

1 304- ERTLON 222 (D,F,G) C Brittain 9-9-12 T Sprake 9
2 0-23 LIVE PROJECT 3 (CD,S) R Craggs 7-9-7 S Whitworth 5
3 000- HEVER GOLF GLORY 13 (G) C Kellett 5-9-7 T Williams 10
4 00-1 FIRST FRAME 7 (B,CD) D Shaw 4-9-7 (6ex) N Pollard (3) 8
5 034- TIME OF NIGHT 26 (BF,CD) J Eyre 6-9-3 C Lowther 2
6 130- DONNA'S DOUBLE 89 (BF,D,G,S) D Eddy 4-9-0 R Cochrane 11
7 00-0 LOBUCHE 7 (S) M Chapman 4-8-13 S Righton (7) 7
8 60-3 KOSEVO 7 (V,CD) D Shaw 5-8-11 C Cogan (7) 6
9 50-2 MUTABARI 9 Mrs S Lamyman 5-8-4 J Quinn 1
10 56-0 RAMSEY HOPE 9 (C,F) D Chapman 6-7-13 L Charnock 4
11 00-0 MARTINDALE 5 (G) R Bastiman 6-7-10 N Carlisle 3

9-2 Live Project, 5-1 Time Of Night, 11-2 Mutabari, 6-1 Kosevo, 7-1 others.

FAKENHAM

THUNDERER
1.10 Wayfarers Way. 1.40 Country Star. 2.10 Molly Fitz Lad. 2.40 Salmon Breeze. 3.10 Tuckers Town. 3.40 Lucky Master.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (GOOD IN PLACES) — SIS

1.10 MARIE CURIE NURSES HANDICAP HURDLE
(£1,833: 2m) (14 runners)

1 0-0P BALLADUR 16 (D,G,S) Mrs J Pitman 6-11-10 B Fenton 95
2 40-6 BLURRED 23 M Tompkins 6-11-7 A Maguire 57
3 10F6 BARTHOLOMEW FAIR 34 (CD,F,S) C Dwyer 8-11-3 R Farrant 97
4 -210 ANTIGUAN FLYER 30 (V,CD,F,G) G Prodromou 10-11-3 Michael Brennan 105
5 1 PRINCE OF INDIA 60 (G) K Bailey 7-11-3 N Williamson 51
6 32/4 KINTAVI 10 (CD,G,S) T Donnelly 9-11-2 G Bradley 65
7 P042 WAYFARERS WAY 20 (D,G,S) N Henderson 8-10-12 L Vickers (7) 103
8 13P6 OUR WEATHERCOCK 49 (D,F,S) P Eccles 8-10-7 D Byrne 91
9 -P45 MEMSAHIB OFESTEEM 34 (D,G) S Gollings 8-10-5 D Gallagher
10 6050 BOLD KING 30 (S) Mrs L Jewell 4-10-5 R Johnson 74
11 2135 MULTI FRANCHISE 10F (S) Mrs L Jewell 6-10-2 J R Kavanagh 85
12 -005 HIGHLY REPUTABLE 12 (CD,F,G) G Bravery 9-10-0 L Cummins (3) 54
13 /0-4 GHOSTLY APPARITION 11 J Upson 6-10-0 J Supple 85
14 5034 CAPSOFF 7 (V) G Hubbard 6-10-0 S Durack 86

9-2 Wayfarers Way, 5-1 Prince Of India, 11-2 Kintavi, 7-1 Bold King, 8-1 others.

1.40 MARIE CURIE HOSPICE CENTRES HANDICAP CHASE
(£2,473: 2m 110yd) (7 runners)

1 F-24 COUNTRY STAR 23 (D,F,G,S) E L James 8-12-0 G Bradley 104
2 1F-4 THE MOOR 53 (F) M Tompkins 8-11-0 A Maguire 112
3 5-26 MANOR MIEO 57 (B,C,F,G,S) G Prodromou 13-10-13 Michael Brennan 107
4 2-PU NORTHERN SINGER 9 (D,F,G,S) R Hodges 9-10-6 S Wynne —
5 4282 INCH EMPEROR 32 (D,F) A Carroll 9-10-1 W Marston
6 -444 NORTHERN SADDLER 27 (BF,CD,F,G,S) R Hodges 12-10-0 N Williamson 116
7 2-PP HIGHLAND FLAME 16 (D,S) A Blackmore 10-10-0 E Husband 100

6-4 Manor Mieo, 4-1 Inch Emperor, 5-1 Northern Saddler, Country Star, 7-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: N Henderson, 3 winners from 8 runners, 37.5%; C Egerton, 3 from 9, 33.3%; S Gollings, 3 from 10, 30.0%; Mrs D Haine, 7 from 25, 28.0%; G Bravery, 3 from 12, 25.0%.
JOCKEYS: R Farrant, 4 winners from 13 rides, 30.8%; Michael Brennan, 5 from 17, 29.4%; M Fitzgerald, 4 from 14, 28.6%; J McCarthy, 4 from 14, 28.6%.

2.10 MARIE CURIE RESEARCH NOVICES HURDLE
(£2,693: 2m 4f) (8 runners)

1 -202 DRAGON LORD 39 (G) R Rowe 5-11-5 B Fenton 82
2 1440 EPSILO DE LA RONCE 27 (G) A H Harvey 7-11-5 J A McCarthy 80
3 52 MOLLY FITZ LAD 16 (BF) Mrs J Pitman 5-11-5 M A Fitzgerald —
4 0P ONEFORTHEFROG 10 C Egerton 6-11-5 N Williamson —
5 ROYAL CASTLE 80F M Tompkins 5-11-5 A Maguire —
6 SELMESTON 84F G Margarson 7-11-5 J Ryan —
7 -03F VALIANT MEMORY 25 (G) N Chance 6-11-0 S Durack 68
8 4245 ERRIGAL 39 D Nicholson 4-10-6 R Johnson

7-4 Dragon Lord, 4-1 Molly Fitz Lad, Errigal, 5-1 Valiant Memory, 8-1 others.

2.40 MARIE CURIE GOLDEN DAFFODIL NOVICES CHASE
(£3,980: 3m 110yd) (7 runners)

1 1-U0 CEDAR SQUARE 32 (BF,D,F,S) V Dartnall 8-11-5 B Fenton 124
2 5F13 DANGER FLYNN 25 (D,G,S) Mrs P Sly 9-11-5 W Marston 118
3 B6-1 KING ON THE RUN 53 (D,G,S) D Nicholson 6-11-5 A Maguire
4 P1/1 SALMON BREEZE 27 (D,G,S) N Henderson 8-11-5 M A Fitzgerald 116
5 /P-P BUBBLES GALORE 39 T D Mccarthy 8-10-12 D Byrne —
6 30-P NO SUCH PARSON 26 Mrs J Buckley 9-10-12 G Tormey —
7 -0P4 ROYAL SCIMITAR 11 (S) M Tompkins 7-10-12 R Johnson 92

7-4 King On The Run, 9-4 Salmon Breeze, 4-1 Danger Flynn, 11-2 others.

3.10 MARIE CURIE CANCER AWARENESS NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE
(£2,348: 2m 5f 110yd) (9 runners)

1 U2-0 TAKE COVER 23 (S) M Tompkins 8-11-12 A Maguire —
2 -U34 SALISONG 16 (S) J Whyte 10-10-5 R Johnson 98
3 -P24 ROSSELL ISLAND 16 (BF,G) Mrs J Pitman 8-10-4 N Williamson 46
4 -P05 TUCKERS TOWN 27 R Rowe 7-10-4 B Fenton 89
5 -P24 PEARL'S CHOICE 25 (S) J McConnochie 11-10-2 R McGrath 99
6 -2P5 EL CORDOBES 18 (B,S) Mrs J Buckley 8-10-0 E Husband —
7 P0P0 INCH CHAMPION 32 A Carroll 7-10-0 W Marston
8 3P5/ SAINT BENE'T 595 (V,F,G) G Prodromou 11-10-0 Michael Brennan —
9 -06P EAU BENITE 23 H Collingridge 6-10-0 L Cummins (3) —

9-4 Rossell Island, 9-2 Tuckers Town, 11-2 Pearl's Choice, 6-1 others.

3.40 MARIE CURIE CANCER CARE MAIDEN HURDLE
(£2,169: 2m 7f 110yd) (11 runners)

1 3P0P ABINGER 23 Miss M Rowland 7-11-7 Gary Lyons —
2 2/P ACADEMY HOUSE 68 T D Mccarthy 6-11-7 W Marston —
3 /0-U DANTE'S GOLD 27 C Egerton 8-11-7 N Williamson —
4 P DIGBY 62 Mrs D Haine 6-11-7 G Tormey —
5 04-5 GENERAL ASSEMBLY 7F G Margarson 7-11-7 M A Fitzgerald
6 -284 LUCKY MASTER 37 J Upson 7-11-7 J Supple 75
7 0-6P MANNA BRAVE 37 A H Harvey 5-11-7 J A McCarthy 53
8 35-4 MISSED CALL 39 M Tompkins 7-11-7 R Johnson 86
9 3003 REPEAT OFFER 7 (S) Mrs L Jewell 7-11-7 G Bradley 85
10 0P- ROBERTO RIVA 385 I Williams 6-11-7 S Durack —
11 -032 SUPREME DAY 16 (F) D Nicholson 6-11-7 A Maguire 75

11-10 Supreme Day, 5-1 Missed Call, 8-1 Lucky Master, 13-2 others.

SATURDAY'S RESULTS

Sandown Park

Going: chases: good to soft, soft in places, hurdles: soft, heavy in places

12.55 (2m 110yd hdle) 1, **Norski Lad** (J Tizzard, 5-6 fav). 2, Blue Royal (5-1). 3, Hit And Run (7-2). 11 ran. Sh hd, 2½l. P Nicholls. Tote: £1.80; £1.10, £1.70, £1.20. DF £4.40. CSF £5.02.

1.25 (2m ch) 1, **Hurricane Lamp** (R Thornton, 11-4); 2, Green Green Desert (5-2). 3, Or Royal (6-1). Stormy Passage (4th) 2-1 fav. 5 ran. 2l, ¾l. D Nicholson. Tote: £3.60; £1.40, £1.90. DF: £4.40. CSF: £9.05.

2.00 (3m 4f 110yd ch) 1, **Kuraidas** (R Dunwoody, 11-8 fav). 2, Act In Time (25-1). 3, Country Beau (7-2). 5 ran. 18l, 28l. J Gifford. Tote £2.20; £1.20, £3.60. DF £8.50. CSF £19.71.

2.30 (2m 110yd hdle) 1, **Behrajan** (R Dunwoody, 9-2); 2, Hidebound (2-5 fav). 3, Great Crusader (50-1). 6 ran. 16l, 1¼l. H Daly. Tote £5.10; £1.90, £1.20. DF: £2.40. CSF: £6.39.

3.05 (3m 5f 110yd ch) 1, **Eudipe** (A P McCoy, 6-1); 2, Glitter Isle (6-1); 3, Calisoe Bay (14-1). Call It A Day (4th) 7-2 fav. 9 ran. 1l, 1½l. M Pipe. Tote: £6.80; £2.40, £2.20, £3.40. DF £27.00. Trifecta: £825.80. CSF £38.19. Tricast £439.50.

3.40 (2m 6f hdle) 1, **Silpmatic** (C Maude, 33-1). 2, Upham Lord (9-2); 3, Ezanak (4-1). Bowles Patrol (4th) 7-2 fav. 12 ran. NR: I Do The Jokes. 1¼, 4l. Simon Earle. Tote £40.50; £7.30, £2.00, £1.30. DF: £184.50. CSF £150.35. Tricast £875.44.

Jackpot: not won (pool of £12,561.12 carried forward to Southwell today). Placepot: £31.20. Quadpot: £12.30.

Lingfield Park

Going: standard

12.50 1, **Paradise Navy** (100-30). 2, Sweet Serenata (4-1). 3, Royal Roulette (2-1 fav). 8 ran. NR: Ela-Yie-Mou.
1.20 1, **Java Shrine** (3-1 fav). 2, Banbury (9-2). 3, Tribal Peace (5-1). 13 ran. NR: Flame Tower.
1.55 1, **Erinvale** (13-8 jt-fav); 2, Oh I Say (8-1). 3, Grasslandik (13-8 jt-fav). 4 ran.
2.25 1, **Royal Preview** (12-1); 2, Compton Akka (11-2); 3, Bebe Cosmoneut (8-1). Dream On Me 11-8 fav. 12 ran.
3.00 1, **Spirit of The Nile** (11-2). 2, Such Boldness (11-8 fav). 3, Lucky Touch (11-1). 7 ran.
3.30 1, **Fields of Omagh** (9-2). 2, Sammys Shuffle (11-8 fav). 3, Isabella Gonzaga (11-2). 8 ran.

Warwick

Going: soft, heavy patches

1.05 1, **Flush** (14-1). 2, New Bird (4-11 fav). 3, Father Krismas (7-1). 13 ran.
1.35 1, **Grizzly Bear** (11-1). 2, High Mood (9-1). 3, Mister Blake (8-11 fav). 6 ran.
2.10 1, **Samuel Wilderspin** (5-2). 2, Cheerful Aspect (15-8 fav). 3, Barfrale Boy (9-2). 6 ran.
2.40 1, **Moondigua** (5-4 fav). 2, Ainsi Soit Il (12-1); 3, Musical Sling (4-1). 7 ran.
3.15 1, **Luke Warm** (9-2). 2, Punters Bar (12-1). 3, Herhorse (10-3 fav). 7 ran.
3.50 1, **Coulthard** (2-1 jt-fav); 2, King's Cross (20-1). 3, The Brewmaster (2-1 jt-fav). 6 ran.

Wolverhampton

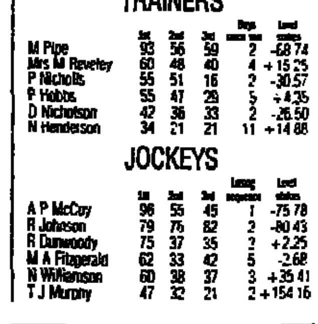
Going: standard

7.00 1, **Mary Hannah** (7-1). 2, Solomian (5-1). 3, Mukarrab (9-4 fav). 13 ran.
7.30 1, **Ultra Calm** (7-4 fav). 2, State Wind (7-2). 3, Perchancer (9-2). 5 ran.
8.00 1, **Festive** (11-10 fav). 2, Waiting Knight (10-1). 3, Shifting (33-1). 12 ran.
8.30 1, **Flying Officer** (9-4); 2, Polaca Green (8-1). 3, Polly Mills (5-1). Scarlett's Boy 11-8 fav. 5 ran.
9.00 1, **Bapsford** (11-4). 2, Bannerer (7-4 fav). 3, Bonne Ville (10-3). 8 ran.
9.30 1, **Surdest** (3-1); 2, Noufan (11-4). 3, Pipe Music (7-4 fav). 5 ran.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

SOUTHWELL: TRAINERS: A Kelleway, 3 winners from 7 runners, 42.9%; J S Moore, 3 from 13, 23.1%; M Johnston, 42 from 209, 20.1%; P Haslam, 19 from 116, 16.4%.
JOCKEYS: R FitzPatrick, 4 winners from 15 rides, 26.7%; N Pollard, 4 from 19, 21.1%; G Parkin, 12 from 66, 18.2%; R Cochrane, 18 from 125, 14.4%.

JUMP LEADERS



TRAINERS

	1st	2nd	3rd	Days since win	Level stakes
M Pipe	93	56	59	2	-68.74
Mrs M Reveley	60	48	40	4	+15.25
P Nicholls	55	51	16	2	-30.57
P Hobbs	55	47	29	5	+4.35
D Nicholson	42	36	33	2	-26.50
N Henderson	34	21	21	11	+14.88

JOCKEYS

	1st	2nd	3rd	Losing sequence	Level stakes
A P McCoy	96	55	45	1	-75.78
R Johnson	79	76	82	2	-80.43
R Dunwoody	75	37	35	2	+2.25
M A Fitzgerald	62	33	42	5	-2.68
N Williamson	60	38	37	3	+35.41
T J Murphy	47	32	21	2	+154.16

Grissell lands double

Point-to-point by Carl Evans

DI GRISSELL, the Sussex trainer, and rider Paul Hacking teamed up for a double when the new season started at Cottenham in Cambridgeshire yesterday.

Around The Horn stayed on gamely to beat local champion Shake Fire in the Men's Open, then Grissell and Hacking took the intermediate with Real Value.

In a good day for long-distance travellers, Yorkshire horses took three of the four maiden races. Triple Eaves under Clive Mulhall, Harbour Blaze partnered by Ruth Clark and Primitive Charles, ridden by teenager Robert Walford, all won for the county, although As You Like It took the other division for local trainer Neil King.

This race featured a first runner in a point-to-point for Tim Forster since he relinquished his licence. Anubis Quercus was in front, although tiring, when falling two out, completing a disappointing day for Forster, who saw his odds-on favourite, Roberty Lea, beaten in the ladies' race by Larry's Lord. Pip Jones pulled up Bold Boss in this race.

A cold but bright day began with several shades of Teeton Mill in evidence. A grey horse by Neltino and trained by Caroline Bailey echoed memories of the time when Teeton Mill graced this sport — on this occasion the horse was The Auctioneer and under the local champion, Lisa Rowe, the nine-year-old hacked up in the day's fastest time.

هكذا من الأصل

FOR THE RECORD

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NFL): Play-off matches: National Conference: Atlanta 20 San Francisco 18. American Conference: Denver 38 Miami 3.

BASKETBALL

[illegible]

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Men: First division: Cardiff C 71 Westminster 87, London T 64 Coventry 78; Mid Sussex 79 Stevenage 76; Solent 80 Guildford 90. Second division: Birmingham 84 Liverpool 70; Chessington 78 Portsmouth 65; Flintshire 82 Reading 81; Manchester 81 Bournemouth 64; Swindon 78 Wandsworth 96, Taunton 89 Thames Valley 61. Third division: Ware 90 NW London 77. Women: First division: Ipswich 89 Leicester 54; London T 58 Northampton 81. Second division: Chelmsford 62 St Albans 50; Plymouth 91 Cardiff C 47.

BOWLS

[illegible]

BOXING

PENSACOLA, Florida: World Boxing Council and World Boxing Association light-heavyweight championship: R Jones Jnr (US, holder) bt R Frazer (US) rsc 2nd. International Boxing Federation lightweight championship: S Mosley (US, holder) bt G Johnson (US) ko 7th

SEOUL: World Boxing Council super-flyweight championship: Cho In-joo (S Kor, holder) bt J L Zarante (Mex) pts.

DARTS

[illegible]

GOLF

[illegible]

HOCKEY

[illegible]

MOTOR RALLYING

[illegible]

RACKETS

[illegible]

REAL TENNIS

[illegible]

RUGBY LEAGUE

[illegible]

SAILING

MELBOURNE: World championships: Third day: Laser class (after six races, with one discard): 1, B Ainslie (GB) 6pts, equal 2, R Scheidt (Br), K Sunesson (Swe) and M Blackburn (Aus) 12. Other British placings: 9, A Simpson 34; 31, M Littlejohn 82; 36, E Wright 96. Fourth day: 49er (after two races) 1, D Dimitri and G Philippe (Fr) 4pts, 2, M Larson and K Hall (US) 5, 3, C Nicholson and E Smyth (Aus) 5. British placings: 5, A and I Budgen 6; 11, A Richardson and P Greenhalgh 10; 19, N Fitzgerald and P Hargreaves 14. Finn Gold Cup (after two races) 1, J Aguado (Spi) 5pts, 2, K Kuret (Cro) 8; 3, A Buchner (Ger) 11. British placings: 11, I Percy 28; 20, C Chumbley 49. Soling (after one race) 1, B Abbott, J Abbott and B Boston (Can) 1pt, 2, S Westergaard, J Bojsen Moller and B Westergaard (Den) 2; 3, J Schuemann, G Bahr and I Borkowski (Ger) 3pts. British placings: 16, L Smith, O Stewart and R Cruickshank 16; 28, A Beadsworth, R Sydenham and B Perkin 28. 470: Men: Group A (after three races) 1, A Kosmatopoulos and K Trigonis (Gr) 14pts, 2, M and F Ivaldi (It) 18; 3, E Braslavets and I Matvienko (Ukr) 19. British placing: 11, N Rogers and J Glanfield 36. Group B (after three races) 1, G Philippe and T Ganou (Fr) 8pts, 2, Z Kalach and D Schwartz (Isr) 12; 3, M Reeser and K Burnham (US) 13. British placings: 18, D Jones and M Horgan 53; 27, M Fenwick and S Hughes 73. Group C (after three races) 1, N Wernot and D Smith (Aus) 5pts, 2, H Rocha and N Barruto (Por) 8; 3, S Cooke and P Nicholas (NZ) 8. British placing: 14, D Edwards and A May 47. Women (after three races) 1, V Khachun and N Gaponovich (Russ) 5pts, 2, S Bekatorou and E Tsoulfa (Gr) 14; 3, F Sesto and P Reinoso (Arg) 14. British placing: 10, L Walker and S Parkin 32

CLIPPER ROUND-THE-WORLD RACE: Leg 2d (Galapagos to Hawaii, with miles to finish) 1, Ariel (A Thomson) 1,937, 2, Seneca (R Dixon) 1,948, 3, Chrysolite (T Hedges) 1,963, 4, Mermerus (B Sollars) 2,001, 5, Taipeng (N Fleming) 2,046, 6, Thermopylae (M Todd) 2,113, 7, Antiope (K Harris) 2,170

SCHOOLS SPORT

FOOTBALL: Premier League Trophy: Under-19: Merseyside 3 West Yorkshire 2. Under-16: Merseyside 1 West Yorkshire 1. Yorkshire Trophy: Bradford 2 Hambleton and Richmond 0. West Midlands League: Coventry 2 Kings Norton and South Birmingham 1, Mid and South Warwickshire 5 Nuneaton 0. Halesowen and Stourbridge 2 Wyre Forest 2. RUGBY UNION: Bradford GS 13 Nottingham GS 5, Doncaster Hall Cross 15 Hymers 15, John Fisher 49 Latymer 0. Wallington 0 Tiffin 51, Reigate GS 18 St Benedict's School 10. HOCKEY: Reigate GS 3 Caterham School 0

SWIMMING

HONG KONG: World Cup short-course event: Saturday: Men: Freestyle: 100m: 1, E S Filho (Br) 49.00sec, 2, K Lanzanni (It) 50.14, 3, D Carter (Aus) 50.24. 400m: 1, J Carstensen (Den) 3min 49.81sec, 2, T Lohnink (Ger) 3 50.99, 3, P Ghiglione (It) 3 52.09. Breaststroke: 50m: 1, J Kruppa (Ger) 28.21, 2, F Deburghgraeve (Bel) 28.55, 3, P Rogers (Aus) 28.70. 200m: 1, Kruppa 2.13.77, 2, S Cowley (Aus) 2.14.09, 3, C Clausen (Swe) 2.14.34. Individual medley: 100m: 1, J Andersen (Den) 56.74, 2, J Watson (Aus) 57.04, 3, O Sammadin (Fr) 59.39. 400m: 1, T Dolan (US) 4.19.96, 2, F Lai-sun (HK) 4.22.38, 3, M Cole (GB) 4.25.31. Backstroke: 100m: 1, S Theloke (Ger) 52.93, 2, L Krayzelburg (US) 53.08, 3, J Watson (Aus) 53.90. 200m: 1, K Stefanyshyn (Can) 2.09.76, 2, C Rund (Ger) 2.09.87, 3, E Gammel (Can) 2.15.87. Butterfly: 50m: 1, Z Oieng (China) 23.91, 2, D Silantyev (Ukr) 24.18, 3, D Carter (Aus) 24.56. 200m: 1, Silantyev 1.56.19, 2, P Licong (China) 1.59.99, 3, M Watkins (GB) 2.01.36. Women: Freestyle: 50m: Equal 1, S Rolph (GB) and S Skou (Den) 25.79, 3, A Drake (US) 26.04. 200m: 1, Y Lina (China) 2.00.48, 2, Q Cam (China) 2.00.63, 3, J Vanlint (Aus) 2.01.67. 800m: 1, C Poll (Cro) 8.31.90; 2, C Benzie (Aus) 8.33.68, 3, L Yan (China) 8.38.08. Breaststroke: 100m: 1, S Gerasch (Ger) 1.09.36, 2, J Huegnig (Ger) 1.11.30, 3, J Mullins (GB) 1.11.66. Butterfly: 100m: 1, R Yi (China) 59.98, 2, S Skou (Den) 1.00.09, 3, K Larka (Swe) 1.01.32. Backstroke: 50m: 1, K Stefanyshyn (Can) 28.97, 2, E Gammel (Can) 29.17, 3, T Hu-wai (HK) 29.53. Individual medley: 200m: 1, Y Klochkova (Ukr) 2.12.69, 2, S Rolph (GB) 2.17.43, 3, S Nordenstam (Swe) 2.18.09

YESTERDAY: Men: Freestyle: 50m: 1, R Gusperti (It) 22.42, 2, N Rickard (Aus) 22.49, 3, D Carter (Aus) 22.53. 200m: 1, J Carstensen (Den) 1.49.26, 2, P Ghiglione (It) 1.49.91, 3, J Rasmussen (Den) 1.51.46. 1,500m: 1, T Lohnink (Ger) 15.33.16, 2, J Carstensen (Den) 15.54.77, 3, H Wolland (NZ) 16.05.75. Breaststroke: 100m: 1, F Deburghgraeve (Bel) 1.00.85, 2, P Aronsson (Swe) 1.02.32, 3, P Rogers (Aus) 1.02.43. Butterfly: 100m: 1, D Silantyev (Ukr) 52.07, 2, Pan Licong (China) 54.43, 3, M Watkins (GB) 55.01. Backstroke: 50m: 1, L Krayzelburg (US) 24.78, 2, S Theloke (Ger) 25.01, 3, T Karlo (Cro) 25.10. 200m: 1, S Theloke (Ger) 1.55.52, 2, G Merchano (Sp) 1.57.06, 3, R Romero (Br) 1.58.49. Individual medley: 200m: 1, T Dolan (US) 2.02.79, 2, J Andersen (Den) 2.03.53, 3, O Sammadin (Fr) 2.05.08. Women: Freestyle: 100m: 1, S Rolph (GB) 56.52, 2, Yang Lina (China) 56.62, 3, J Vanlint (Aus) 57.04. 400m: 1, C Poll (C Rica) 4.08.37, 2, Li Yan (China) 4.14.38, 3, C Smart (GB) 4.15.50. Breaststroke: 50m: 1, S Gerasch (Ger) 31.74, 2, J Mullins (GB) 33.61, 3, H Wong (HK) 33.99. 200m: 1, J Huegnig (Ger) 2.30.27, 2, S Gerasch (Ger) 2.30.48, 3, S-J Sheehy 2.35.53. Individual medley: 100m: 1, S Rolph (GB) 1.02.58, 2, Y Klochkova (Ukr) 1.04.50, 3, T Hu-wai (HK) 1.04.88. 400m: 1, Y Klochkova (Ukr) 4.39.92, 2, C Benzie (Aus) 4.46.56, 3, D Durand (Can) 4.51.47. Backstroke: 100m: 1, K Stefanyshyn (Can) 1.00.75, 2, E Gammel (Can) 1.01.75, 3, C Rund (Ger) 1.02.22. Butterfly: 50m: 1, S Skou (Den) 27.58, 2, K von Ruisenholtz (It) 27.96, 3, A Drake (US) 28.01. 200m: 1, S Skou (Den) 2.10.17, 2, Ruan Yi (China) 2.12.47, 3, M Freedman (US) 2.13.11

TENNIS

DOHA: Qatar Open: Semi-finals: R Schuttler (Ger) bt C Pioline (Fr) 3-6, 6-2, 7-5. T Henman (GB) bt K Alami (Mor) 6-4, 6-2. Final: Schuttler bt Henman 6-4, 5-7, 6-1

PERTH: Hopman Cup: Final: Australia bt Sweden 2-1 (Australia names first): J Dokic bt A Carlsson 6-2, 7-6. M Philippoussis bt J Bjorkman 6-3, 7-6. Philippoussis and Dokic lost to Bjorkman and Carlsson 6-8)

ADELAIDE: Men's Australian hardcourt championships: Semi-finals: T Enqvist (Swe) bt S Draper (Aus) 6-3, 7-5. L Hewitt (Aus) bt J Stoltenberg (Aus) 6-1, 6-3. Final: Enqvist bt Hewitt 4-6, 6-1, 6-2

HONG KONG: Challenge Cup: Final: V Williams (US) bt S Graf (Ger) 2-2, ret

GOLD COAST: Women's Australian hardcourt championships: Final: P Schnyder (Switz) bt M Pierce (Fr) 4-6, 7-6, 6-2

AUCKLAND: ASB Classic: Final: J Halard-Decugis (Fr) bt D van Roost (Bel) 6-4, 6-1

SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT: First round: A Molik (Aus) bt N Zvereva (Bel) 6-3, 6-4. C Martinez (Sp) bt R McQuillan (Aus) 6-0, 6-3

TELFORD: Girobank Tour: Finals: Men: D Sapsford (Surrey) bt C Wilkinson (Hants) 6-3, 6-3. Women: M Marina (Russ) bt K Warne-Holland (Dorset) 6-0, 6-1

ATHLETICS

Track and field

NATIONAL INDOOR ARENA, Birmingham: Midland Counties Indoor Open: Men: 60m: J Regis (Belgrave) 6.78sec. 60m hurdles: R Baillie (Sale) 7.77 (Scottish record). 400m: L Baird (Cleethorpes) 48.03. High jump: M Latham (City of Stoke) 2.05m. Pole vault: C North (Bristol) 5m. Women: 60m: C Bloomfield (Essex Ladies) 7.47. 400m: V Day (Essex Ladies) 55.66. 60m hurdles: R King (Cardiff) 8.58. High jump: A Bemrose (Aldershot, Farnham and District) 1.73m. Pole vault: L Stanton (Sale) 3.60m. Long jump: D Benjamin (Windsor, Slough and Eton) 5.60m.

JARROW: North Eastern Counties indoor championships: Men: 60m: 1, R Linnell (Gateshead) 6.9sec; 2, R Newsome (Croydon) 7.0; 3, N Wiscombe (Jarrow and Hebburn) 7.3. 60m hurdles: R Hunter (unattached) 8.5. Women: 60m: 1, S Todd (Jarrow and Hebburn) 7.9; 2, V Barr (Gateshead) 8.0; 3, R Irving (Edinburgh Woolen) 8.1. 60m hurdles: S Todd (Jarrow and Hebburn) 9.3.

CRYSTAL PALACE: Open indoor meeting: Men: 60m: R Morten (Vale of Aylesbury) 7.6sec. 60m hurdles: M Freckleton (Blackheath) 8.5. Women: 60m: M Paris (Ilford) 7.9. 60m hurdles: S Claxton (Colchester and Tendring) and S Porter (Sutton) 9.0.

Cross country

AMOREBIETA: IAAF meeting: Men (10.8km): 1, R Limo (Ken) 33min 53sec; 2, B Limo (Ken) 33:53; 3, H Mekonnen (Eth) 33:54; 4, T Nyariki (Ken) 34:02; 5, A Mezegebu (Eth) 34:07; 6, P Kosgei (Ken) 34:11. Women (6.3km): 1, G Wami (Eth) 23:19; 2, Z Ouaziz (Mor) 23:20; 3, J Maranga (Ken) 23:24; 4, M Denboba (Eth) 24:57; 5, A Worku (Eth) 24:01; 6, B Adere (Eth) 24:39.

BATH UNIVERSITY: Avon championships: Men (11km): 1, R Whalley (Bath University) 36min 42sec; 2, M Cox (Salford) 37:42; 3, J Emery (Westbury) 37:55; 4, S Shepley (Tipton) 38:17; 5, B Trapnell (Bath University) 38:24; 6, M O'Doherty (Westbury) 38:51. Teams: 1, Westbury 86pts; 2, Bristol 134; 3, City of Bath 156. Women (7.2km): 1, A McConnell (Bristol) 29:00; 2, K Dyer (Bristol) 29:19; B Lambert (Bristol) 29:5[illegible]. Team: Bristol.

CLAYBURY: Essex championships: Men (7.5 miles): 1, N Wetheridge (Basildon) 38min 42sec; 2, E Martin (Basildon) 39:32; 3, J Mills (Chelmsford) 41:25; 4, M Whelan (Chelmsford) 41:47; 5, R Maleed (Colchester & Tendring) 41:51; 6, A Kolkai (Ilford) 42:04. Teams: 1, Chelmsford 59pts; 2, Havering Mayesbrook 130; 3, Ilford 186. Women (5 miles): 1, J Sullivan (Havering Mayesbrook) 31:33; 2, G Greenhalgh (Colchester & Tendring) 31:38; 3, D Harmse (Havering Mayesbrook) 32:44; 4, L Higgs (Colchester Harriers) 32:48; 5, J Critchley (Ilford) 33:04; 6, A Oakman (Colchester & Tendring) 33:09. Teams: 1, Havering Mayesbrook 31; 2, Colchester & Tendring 42; 3, Ilford 75.

GILLINGHAM: Kent championships: Men (12km): 1, B Royden (Medway) 38min 40sec; 2, Allen Graffin (Tonbridge) 38:42; 3, M Steinle (Blackheath) 39:34; 4, C Knight (GEC Avionics) 40:06; 5, D Smith (Blackheath) 40:21; 6, Andrew Graffin (Tonbridge) 41:03. Teams: 1, Tonbridge 64pts; 2, Medway 95; 3, Kent AC 178. Women (6.4km): 1, L Watson (GEC Avionics) 24:05; 2, J Stacey (Bromley) 24:11; 3, C Perkins (Ashford) 24:24; 4, A Fletcher (Dulwich Runners) 24:27. Teams: 1, Invicta East Kent 30; 2, Medway 32; 3, Ashford 51.

BLACKBURN: Lancashire championships: Men (7 miles): 1, D Lewis (Rossendale) 36min 16sec; 2, A Morgan-Lee (Southampton Running Club) 37:08; 3, A Walpole (Salford) 38:15; 4, P Leybourne (Salford) 38:25; 5, J Prowse (Blackpool & Fylde) 39:22; 6, M Jackson (Coventry Godiva) 39:37. Teams: 1, Clayton-le-Moors 114pts; 2, Manx, Isle of Man 124; 3, North Fylde 190. Veteran: 1, A Rowe (Wesham) 40:37; 2, J Houghton (North Fylde) 42:29; 3, K Walding (Wesham) 42:34. Team: Wesham 32. Women (4 miles): 1, P Powell (Blackburn) 22:59; 2, M Mann (Preston) 23:14; 3, J Ashman (Manx) 24:31; 4, C Barmead (North Fylde) 25:16; 5, J Hodkinson (Preston) 25:38; 6, A Martin (Clayton-le-Moors) 26:28. Teams: 1, Preston 14; 2, Clayton-le-Moors 23; 3, North Fylde 29. Veteran: 1, E Leonard (Chorley) 27:25; 2, C Lewis (Clayton-le-Moors) 27:44; 3, H Sandalands (Wigan Phoenix) 27:48. Team: Clayton-le-Moors 16.

SHIRLEY PARK, St Helens: Merseyside championships: Men (7.5 miles): 1, G Ellis (Liverpool Harriers) 41min 38sec; 2, P Howarth (Wirral) 41:54; 3, N Vengdasalam (Liverpool Pembroke Sefton) 42:17; 4, R Berry (Liverpool Pembroke Sefton) 43:07; 5, B Murphy (Liverpool Pembroke Sefton) 43:26; 6, J Boardman (Liverpool Pembroke Sefton) 43:45. Teams: 1, Liverpool Pembroke Sefton 37pts; 2, Liverpool Harriers 142; 3, Wirral 153. Veteran: M Girvan (Warrington) 43:58. Over-50: C Slavin (Liverpool Running Club) 51:13. Women (8km): 1, A Griffiths (Sale) 31:10; 2, G Varley (Liverpool Harriers) 31:30; 3, C Smith (Liverpool Harriers) 33:52. Teams: 1, Wirral 45; 2, South Liverpool 52. Veteran: G Darby (Liverpool Pembroke Sefton) 34:55. Over-40: M McKenzie (South Liverpool) 35:14.

RUISLIP WOODS: Middlesex championships: Men (12km): 1, M Fatihi (Puma TVH) 36min 25sec; 2, A Fooks (Puma TVH) 36:45; 3, A Coleman (Enfield) 37:26; 4, K Thompson (London Irish) 37:27; 5, S Kennick (London Irish) 37:37; 6, C Beecham (Highgate) 38:03. Teams: 1, London Irish 72pts; 2, Highgate 124; 3, North London 149. Women (5.6km): 1, H Yelling (Hounslow) 22:56; 2, J Lodge (Hounslow) 23:40; 3, K Jenrick (Highgate) 23:46; 4, L Towns (Puma TVH) 24:21. Teams: 1, London Irish 53; 2, Ealing, Southall and Middlesex 78; 3, Highgate 85; 4, Muswell Hill Runners 88.

BATH UNIVERSITY: Somerset championships: Men (11km): 1, E Richards (Wells City) 38min 20sec; 2, A Roper (Wells City) 39:23; 3, J Swift-Smith (Wells City) 40:03. Team: Wells City 111pts. Women (7.2km): 1, A Taswell (Wells City) 28:14; 2, A Gascoigne (Wells City) 28:18; 3, H May (Hounslow) 29:24. Team: Wells City.

LANCING: Sussex championships: Men (7.5 miles): 1, N Gates (Brighton & Hove) 43min 4sec; 2, K Holland (Crawley) 43:15; 3, S Rees-Jones (Brighton & Hove) 44:00; 4, S Moran (Brighton & Hove) 44:05; 5, T Carrick (Phoenix) 44:12; 6, K Hoyte (Phoenix) 44:25. Teams: 1, Brighton & Hove 40pts; 2, Phoenix 77; 3, Brighton & Hove B 138. Women (4 miles): 1, W Holden (Lewes) 24:45; 2, R Adams (Horsham Blue Star) 25:44; 3, J Hardwick (Hastings Runners) 25:57; 4, L Williams (Arena 80) 26:18; 5, L Jones (Arena 80) 26:20. Teams: 1, Arena 80 36; 2, Brighton & Hove 64; 3, Hastings AC 91.

LEAMINGTON SPA: Warwickshire championships: Men (9.8km): 1, M Bouldstridge (Birchfield) 32min 18sec; 2, A Farnsworth (Tipton) 32:41; 3, R Taylor (Coventry Godiva) 33:03; 4, R Mason (Leicester Coritanians) 33:15; 5, M Hirsch (Birchfield) 33:31; 6, D Smith (Solihull & Small Heath) 33:35. Teams: 1, Coventry Godiva 53pts; 2, Solihull & Small Heath 85; 3, Birchfield 103. Women (7km): C Adams (Centurion Road Runners) 22:06; 2, T Brown (Coventry Godiva) 26:28; 3, H Keane (Tipton) 26:31; 4, D O'Shea (Northbrook) 27:28. Teams: 1, Coventry Godiva 21; 2, Royal Sutton Coldfield 31; 3, Northbrook 37.

SWINDON: Wiltshire championships: Men (10.2km): 1, D Mitchison (Swindon) 34min 14sec; 2, C Sykes (Swindon) 34:25; 3, G Gardner (Calne Runners) 36:20. Teams: 1, Swindon; 2, City of Salisbury; 3, Calne Runners. Women (5km): 1, W Coombes (City of Salisbury) 20:10; 2, E O'Dowd (Swindon) 20:26; 3, A Stiles (Westbury) 20:49. Teams: 1, Swindon; 2, City of Salisbury; 3, Swindon B. Veteran: Z Marchant (City of Bath) 21:06.

ROTHERHAM: Yorkshire championships: Men (7.5 miles): 1, K Critchley (Sale) 35min 59sec; 2, I Mitchell (Longwood) 36:59; 3, C Moore (Bingley) 37:15; 4, I Fisher (Otley) 37:47; 5, A Peace (Bingley) 37:50; 6, J Heap (Hallamshire) 37:51. Teams: 1, Bingley 60pts; 2, Leeds City 103; 3, Hallamshire 179. Women (4 miles): 1, C Greenwood (Bingley) 23:23; 2, P Thackray (Hallamshire Sheffield) 24:11; 3, J Clark (Pudsey & Bramley) 24:24; 4, L Mawer (Imperial, Harrogate) 24:35; 5, C Patten (Hallamshire Sheffield) 24:41; 6, I Woffenden (Leeds City) 24:55. Teams: 1, Hallamshire 23; 2, Leeds City 25; 3, Rotherham 34.

RICHMOND PARK: Surrey Women's League (6km): First division: 1, R Disley 21min 18sec; 2, C Diss (Herne Hill) 21:26; 3, C McKinlay-Evans (SLH) 22:07. Teams: 1, Herne Hill 42pts; 2, South London Harriers 45; 3, Thames Hare & Hounds 74. Leading standings (after three matches): 1, South London Harriers 26; 2, Herne Hill 26; 3, Thames Hare & Hounds 22. Second division: 1, K Ramsey (Walton) 21:11; 2, S Blackett (Dulwich Park Runners) 21:23; 3, E Viljoen (Hercules Wimbledon) 21:41. Teams: 1, Belgrave 94; 2, Stragglers 118; 3, Walton 162. Leading standings (after three matches): 1, Belgrave 51; 2, Stragglers 47; 3, Dulwich Park Runners 45.

Road running

WIGAN: Ashurst Beacon 6 miles: 1, S Willis (Todmorden) 38min 25sec; 2, B Bolland (Newburgh) 39:22; 3, A Hesketh (Horwich) 39:59. Teams: 1, Newburgh 13; 2, Horwich 23; 3, Southport 36. Women: 1, J Coleman (Chorley) 53:34; 2, S Cooper (Southport) 55:17; 3, C Culner (Southport) 55:38.

HOMERTON: Inter-club 3 miles: 1, M Cates (Eton Manor) 15min; 2, A Lashmar (Victoria Park Harriers) 15:50; 3, R Newbould (Victoria Park Harriers) 15:52. Teams: 1, Victoria Park Harriers 357pts; 2, Eton Manor 386. Veteran: L Austin (Victoria Park Harriers) 16:39. Over-60: T Everitt (Eton Manor) 17:50. Women: 1, A Gammon (Victoria Park Harriers) 19:31; 2, J Stafford (Eton Manor) 20:25; 3, L Dear (Eton Manor) 25:49.

SNOW REPORTS

SKI CLUB

	Depth (cm) L	Depth (cm) U	Conditions Piste	Runs to Resort	Off/p	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
Andorra								
Soldeu	65	85	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-3	09/01
Austria								
Kitzbühel	20	70	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	0	10/01
Obergurgl	35	150	Fair	Hard	Varied	Fair	-3	08/01
Söll	20	70	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-3	09/01
Canada								
Lake Louise	105	122	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-2	09/01
France								
Alpe d'Huez	70	180	Good	Open	Varied	Snow	-5	10/01
Avoriaz	80	100	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-2	10/01
Flaine	62	185	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-4	10/01
La Clusaz	80	110	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-1	10/01
La Plagne	65	150	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-2	10/01
La Tania	53	105	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud	-3	10/01
Les Arcs	43	166	Fair	Open	Varied	Cloud	0	09/01
Megève	50	80	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud	-1	10/01
Méribel	35	105	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud	-3	09/01
Tignes	62	160	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-4	10/01
Val Thorens	50	120	Good	Open	Varied	Snow	-6	10/01
Val d'Isère	60	140	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-4	09/01
Valmorel	35	105	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud	1	09/01
Italy								
Cervinia	30	150	Fair	Open	Varied	Snow	-2	10/01
Cortina	15	85	Good	Closed	Varied	Cloud	0	10/01
Livigno	20	85	Good	Artificial	Varied	Cloud	-4	09/01
Norway								
Geilo	60	60	Good	Open	Packed	Sun	-6	07/01
Switzerland								
Crans Montana	20	230	Good	Artificial	Powder	Cloud	-2	09/01
Davos	35	130	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-8	08/01
Grindelwald	20	180	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud	0	09/01
Klosters	30	130	Good	Open	Powder	Fair	-6	09/01
Mürren	30	180	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	0	09/01
St Moritz	30	50	Hard	Closed	Powder	Cloud	-2	10/01
United States								
Aspen	60	83	Good	Open	Varied	Snow	-1	10/01
Deer Valley	77	85	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	0	08/01

http://www.skiclub.co.uk L = lower slopes; U = upper slopes

Guy Smith-Bingham serves during one of his two finals victories over Andrew Titchener-Barrett at Queen's Club yesterday. Smith-Bingham won both the under-21 and under-24 rackets championships. Photograph: Tom Hevezi

ICE HOCKEY

SEKONDA SUPERLEAGUE: Saturday: Nottingham Panthers 8 London Knights 3. Yesterday: Manchester Storm 5 Sheffield Steelers 2

	P	W	L	D	OL	F	A	Pts
Manchester	23	19	2	1	1	90	42	40
Cardiff	23	16	5	0	2	84	56	34
Nottingham	23	14	7	0	2	85	76	30
Ayr	20	8	8	3	1	61	65	20
Bracknell	23	8	12	1	2	71	86	19
Sheffield	24	7	13	3	1	73	82	18
London	24	7	13	2	2	71	104	18
Newcastle	24	7	14	2	1	63	88	17

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Friday: Ottawa 5 Tampa Bay 1. Calgary 1 Dallas 0. Vancouver 1 Florida 1. Anaheim 4 Phoenix 1. Saturday: Detroit 3 Colorado 2. Montreal 3 New York Islanders 2. Toronto 6 Boston 3. Washington 3 New Jersey 2. Philadelphia 2 Carolina 0. Pittsburgh 2 St Louis 1. Nashville 3 Chicago 3. Los Angeles 1 Edmonton 1. Buffalo 2 San Jose 2

Eastern Conference

Northeast division

	W	L	T	F	A	Pts
Toronto	23	15	2	129	114	48
Buffalo	21	10	6	109	77	48
Ottawa	20	13	5	116	88	45
Boston	19	14	6	104	89	44
Montreal	14	19	7	92	107	35

Atlantic division

	W	L	T	F	A	Pts
Philadelphia	20	9	10	112	82	50
New Jersey	22	11	5	114	100	49
Pittsburgh	19	10	7	107	94	45
NY Rangers	15	17	7	105	109	37
NY Islanders	13	25	3	93	120	29

Southeast division

	W	L	T	F	A	Pts
Carolina	18	16	7	106	101	43
Florida	13	14	10	95	101	36
Washington	14	20	3	88	94	31
Tampa Bay	9	27	3	81	137	21

Western Conference

Central division

	W	L	T	F	A	Pts
Detroit	20	17	2	119	106	42
St Louis	15	13	9	102	93	39
Nashville	14	21	4	94	121	32
Chicago	11	23	6	87	129	28

Northwest division

	W	L	T	F	A	Pts
Colorado	17	19	4	96	104	38
Edmonton	16	18	5	110	103	37
Vancouver	13	22	5	104	123	31
Calgary	13	24	3	101	125	29

Pacific division

	W	L	T	F	A	Pts
Dallas	25	6	6	113	72	56
Phoenix	21	10	5	99	78	47
Anaheim	15	16	8	94	89	38
Los Angeles	15	21	4	96	104	34
San Jose	12	17	10	87	95	34

CRICKET

One-day international

New Zealand v India

TAUPO (India won toss): New Zealand beat India by five wickets (D/L method)

INDIA

S C Ganguly c Larsen b Vettori	60
S R Tendulkar c Harris b Cairns	0
R Dravid not out	123
*M Azharuddin b Larsen	9
A Jadeja c and b Harris	10
R R Singh run out	27
H H Kanitkar not out	17
Extras (lb 5, w 6)	11
Total (5 wkts, 50 overs)	257

†N R Mongia, N Chopra, J Srinath and B K V Prasad did not bat.

FALL OF WICKETS 1-3, 2-116, 3-144, 4-183, 5-223

BOWLING Cairns 8-0-53-1. Doull 7-1-34-0. Nash 8-0-42-0. Larsen 10-0-46-1. Harris 10-1-35-1. Vettori 5-0-26-1. McMillan 2-0-16-0

NEW ZEALAND

R G Twose c Mongia b Srinath	10
M J Horne lbw b Tendulkar	57
C D McMillan c Ganguly b Srinath	79
C L Cairns c Srinath b Singh	23
†A C Parore not out	16
C Z Harris run out	13
D J Nash not out	1
Extras (lb 5, w 2)	7
Total (5 wkts, 38 overs)	200

*S P Fleming, D L Vettori, G R Larsen and S B Doull did not bat.

FALL OF WICKETS 1-21, 2-126, 3-166, 4-168, 5-194

BOWLING Srinath 8-0-35-2. Prasad 8-1-41-0. Chopra 8-0-37-0. Singh 4-0-36-1. Tendulkar 8-0-34-1. Kanitkar 2-0-12-0.

Umpires: B F Bowden and D B Cowie

SHEFFIELD SHIELD: Third day of four: Adelaide: South Australia 284-9 dec (B A Johnson 122, G R Parker 62) and 218-6 (G R Parker 117 not out). Western Australia 330 (M Dighton 95, S M Katich 60, G Chillingworth 5-96)

MERCANTILE CUP: Canberra: Victoria 226-4 (50 overs; B J Hodge 118). Canberra 231-6 (43 overs; B Haddin 133). Canberra beat Victoria by four wickets.

SUPERSPORT SERIES: Third day of four: Durban: Free State 298 and 43-0. Natal 564-5 dec (D J Watson 155, J Kent 109 not out, D M Benkenstein 104 not out, M L Bruyns 81). East London: Gauteng 199 and 334 (S G Koenig 96, K R Rutherford 74, A J Hall 53, T Henderson 5-51). Border 198 and 95-2. Kimberley: Northern Titans 255 and 190-5 dec (M van Jaarsveld 67, M J R Rindel 51). Griqualand West 123 and 37-4. Port Elizabeth: Eastern Province 220 and 159 (E Simons 5-43). Western Province 239 and 95-3 (G Kirsten 53 not out)

RUGBY UNION

European Cup

Semi-finals

Colomiers 10 Perpignan 6

Colomiers: Try: Skrela. Con: Skrela. Pen: Labit. Perpignan: Pens: Bellot 2.

Ulster 33 Stade Français 27

Ulster: Tries: Humphreys, McKinty. Con: Mason. Pens: Mason 5. Dropped goals: Mason 2. Stade Français: Tries: Juillet 2, Lièvremont. Cons: Dominguez 3. Pens: Dominguez 2.

EUROPEAN SHIELD: Postponed: Bourgoin v Brive; Montferrand v Narbonne.

Tetley's Bitter Cup

Fourth round

Bedford 22 Henley 29

Bedford: Tries: Forster 2, Whetstone 2. Con: Yapp. Henley: Tries: Sharp 2, Berryman, P Osman. Cons: Roke 3. Pen: Roke. Att: 1,805.

Bristol 19 London Irish 43

Bristol: Tries: Baber, M Bennett, penalty try. Cons: Hull 2. London Irish: Tries: Venter 2, Bishop, Boer, Kirke, O'Shea, Woods. Cons: Woods 4. Att: 7,000

Gloucester 31 Worcester 17

Gloucester: Tries: Fortey, Mapletoft, Ojomoh, P Saint-Andre. Con: Mapletoft. Pens: Mapletoft 3. Worcester: Tries: Jenner, Richardson. Cons: Liley 2. Pen: Liley. Att: 7,135.

Harlequins 46 Esher 10

Harlequins: Tries: O'Leary 3, Williams 2, Jenkins, Lacroix. Cons: Liley 2, Schuster 2. Pen: Schuster. Esher: Try: Bird. Con: Gregory. Pen: Gregory. Att: 3,759

Kendal 20 London Scot 25

Kendal: Tries: Wolstenholme 2, Mee, Whitehead. London Scottish: Tries: Forrest, MacDonald, Menson-Bishop. Cons: De Beer 2. Pens: De Beer 2. Att: 3,000

Leicester 65 Barking 6

Leicester: Tries: Lloyd 4, Addleton 2, Freshwater, Loughead, Moody, Stimpson, Stuart. Cons: Stimpson 3, Stransky 2. Barking: Pens: Azzopardi 2.

Morley 9 Saracens 76

Morley: Try: C Hall. Pen: Bamber. Saracens: Tries: Daniel 3, Olsen 2, Coker, Cole, Free, Grewcock, Johnson, Penaud, Singer. Cons: Johnson 8. Att: 2,000.

Moseley 24 Lydney 25

Moseley: Tries: Buxton, S Jones, Martin. Pens: Smart 3. Lydney: Tries: Dunlop 2, D Edwards. Cons: Osbourne, Paisley. Pens: Osbourne, Paisley. Att: 800.

Newcastle 25 Bath 22

Newcastle: Try: Beattie. Con: Wilkinson. Pens: Wilkinson 6. Bath: Tries: Catt, Earnshaw, Webster. Cons: Catt 2. Pen: Catt.

Nottingham 6 Exeter 24

Nottingham: Try: Sturdy. Pen: C Atkinson. Exeter: Tries: Armstrong, Webber, Woodman. Cons: B Easson 3. Pen: B Easson.

Rotherham 24 Leeds 27

Rotherham: Tries: Garnett, Kenworthy, Lax, Scully. Cons: Niarchos 2. Leeds: Tries: Easterby 2, Middleton, Reid. Cons: Cawthorne, Tupulotu. Pen: Tupulotu.

Richmond 46 Newbury 12

Richmond: Tries: Brown 3, Bateman, Chapman, Pichot, Vander, Waine. Cons: Va'a 3. Newbury: Tries: Gully, Holloway. Con: Polhippi. Att: 2,659

Sale 31 Northampton 47

Sale: Tries: Yates 2, Howarth, Rakwekul, A Sanderson. Cons: Howarth 3. Northampton: Tries: Seely 3, Beal, Méndez, Moir, penalty try. Cons: Grayson 6. Att: 3,000.

Sedgley Park 3 Wasps 53

Sedgley Park: Pen: Moon. Wasps: Tries: Logan 3, Scrivener 3, Sampson 2, Scrase. Cons: King 4. Att: 2,900.

Waterloo 18 Orrell 11

Waterloo: Tries: Blyth 2, Beckett. Pen: Griffiths. Orrell: Try: Warr. Pens: Verbickas 2. Att: 900

(aet; 8-8 after 80min)

W Hartlepool 34 Bracknell 14

West Hartlepool: Tries: Collier, Farrell, McDonald, Ponton, Salter. Cons: Vile 3. Pen: Vile. Bracknell: Tries: Jackson, Yates. Cons: Russell 2. Att: 600

Jewson National League

Second division north

Aspatria	24	Whitchurch	15
Nuneaton	6	New Brighton	3
Stourbridge	10	Preston	25
Winnington Pk	21	Lichfield	10

POSTPONED: Walsall v Hinckley.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Preston	16	15	0	1	515	238	30
Stourbridge	16	13	0	3	466	257	26
New Brighton	16	11	0	5	412	151	22
Sheffield	15	10	0	5	327	249	20
Nuneaton	16	9	2	5	368	324	20
Aspatria	16	9	0	7	401	359	18
Sedgley Park	15	8	1	6	399	299	17
Kendal	15	8	0	7	374	221	16
Walsall	15	7	1	7	349	398	15
Sandal	15	7	0	8	367	359	14
Whitchurch	16	4	1	11	249	395	9
Hinckley	15	2	1	12	194	473	5
Winnington Pk	16	2	0	14	189	549	4
Lichfield	16	1	0	15	196	524	2

Second division south

North Walsham	42	Met Police	6
Plymouth	23	Tabard	22
Weston-s-Mare	19	Havant	27

POSTPONED: Cheltenham v Norwich.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Esher	15	14	0	1	508	163	28
N Walsham	16	13	0	3	347	181	26
Bracknell	15	13	0	2	327	201	28
Barking	15	12	0	3	362	178	24
Met Police	16	8	1	7	277	334	17
Norwich	15	8	0	7	229	215	16
Tabard	16	6	1	9	279	300	13
Weston-s-Mare	16	6	1	9	262	318	13
Redruth	15	5	1	9	247	339	11
Plymouth	16	5	1	10	270	389	11
Bridgwater	15	4	2	9	267	319	10
Clifton	15	4	1	10	229	276	9
Cheltenham	15	3	0	12	204	371	6
Havant	16	3	0	13	191	433	6

LONDON AND SOUTH EAST: Basingstoke 25 Thurrock 27; Guildford and Godalming 14 Westcombe Park 44; Harlow 36 Cheshunt 19; Old Mid-Whitgiftians 13 Thanet Wanderers 30; Staines 29 Woodford 8; Sutton and Epsom 100 Southend 0.

SOUTH WEST: Barnstaple 32 Keynsham 3; Berry Hill 21 Gloucester OB 10; Launceston 55 Torquay Athletic 3; Matson 10 Penzance/Newlyn 17; Salisbury 15 Old Patesians 0; Stroud 7 Maidenhead 24.

MIDLANDS: Barkers Butts 21 Kenilworth 13; Bedford Athletic 13 Banbury 23; Belgrave 6 Scunthorpe 16; Broadstreet 27 Mansfield 8; Burton 35 Leighton Buzzard 3; Dudley 19 Syston 8; Wolverhampton 12 Stoke-on-Trent 8.

NORTH: Blaydon 27 Wigton 3; Bridlington 5 Northern 10; Macclesfield 27 Broughton Park 17; Stockton 3 Tynedale 21; Widnes 10 Doncaster 10

TETLEY'S BITTER VASE: Fifth round: South West: Avon 44 Penmanians 7. London and South East: Billericay 17 UCSOB 5. Midlands: Wellingborough OG 13 Upton-on-Severn 5.

Welsh Challenge Trophy

Pool A

Aberavon 42 Georgia 0

Aberavon: Tries: D Griffiths, Hamilton, P Jones, R Lewis, Maddock, penalty try. Cons: Stork 6.

POSTPONED: Pontypridd v Edinburgh Reivers

Pool B

Ebbw Vale 22 Glasgow Cal 33

Ebbw Vale: Tries: Hawker, Manley, Olsen. Cons: Strange 2. Pen: Strange. Glasgow Caledonians: Tries: Leslie, Longstaff, Shaw, Stark. Cons: Hayes 2. Pens: Hayes 3.

Llanelli 23 Blue Bulls 10

Llanelli: Tries: Madden, penalty try. Cons: S Jones 2. Pens: S Jones 3. Blue Bulls: Try: Van Schalkwyk. Con: Lawless. Pen: Benadie

Newport 21 Gauteng 19

Newport: Tries: Gibbs, M Watkins. Con: Mitchell. Pens: Mitchell 3. Gauteng Falcons: Tries: Espag, Lourens, Schroeder. Cons: Van As 2.

Welsh League

First division

Abertillery 32 Tondu 14

Abertillery: Tries: Green, penalty try, Stent, Thorne, D Williams. Cons: Withers 2. Pen: Withers. Tondu: Try: K Hocking. Pens: Welsh 3.

Blackwood 10 Rumney 17

Blackwood: Try: Laycock. Con: Brown. Pen: Brown. Rumney: Tries: L Abdul, Davies, George. Con: Davies

Dunvant 17 Bonymaen 12

Dunvant: Tries: Kiла, Middleton. Cons: Daniel 2. Pen: Daniel. Bonymaen: Tries: M John, C Lewis. Con: S Davies

Llandovery 39 SW Police 8

Llandovery: Tries: M Jones 3, Stead, Wills. Cons: Hancox 4. Pens: Hancox 2. South Wales Police: Try: C Rees. Pen: Cox

Maesteg 10 Newbridge 12

Maesteg: Try: A Lewis. Con: R Davies. Pen: A Davies. Newbridge: Tries: Adds, Mason. Con: Williams

Pontypool 44 UWIC 22

Pontypool: Tries: M Cawley 2, M McCarthy 2, Bishop, Field, Silva, Vunipola. Cons: Silva 2. UWIC: Tries: P Jones, Matthews, A Wagstaff. Cons: Matthews, Welch. Pen: Welch.

Tredegar 25 Cross Keys 12

Tredegar: Tries: Pinch 2, penalty try. Cons: A Chapman 2. Pens: A Chapman 2. Cross Keys: Tries: G Ellis, Stroud. Con: Bebb

Treorchy 32 Merthyr 20

Treorchy: Tries: Martin, Owen, Williams. Con: D Evans. Pens: D Evans 5. Merthyr: Try: J Lloyd. Pens: J Lloyd 5

	P	W	D	L	F	A	T	B	Pts
Dunvant	17	14	0	3	579	266	65	14	56
Bonymaen	17	12	1	4	400	221	57	10	47
Pontypool	16	12	0	4	410	287	54	6	42
Cross Keys	16	11	0	5	388	257	48	5	38
Treorchy	16	10	0	6	400	263	53	7	37
Llandovery	17	10	1	6	437	334	59	5	36
Merthyr	17	10	1	6	343	314	45	3	34
Rumney	16	9	0	7	321	341	47	7	34
Abertillery	17	9	1	7	329	336	39	5	33
Newbridge	18	8	0	10	396	366	45	5	29
Tondu	18	6	0	12	279	436	35	2	20
Tredegar	17	5	1	11	312	372	37	3	19
Blackwood	15	4	1	10	267	295	42	6	19
UWIC	18	4	1	11	308	446	40	3	16
SW Police	16	3	1	12	224	416	32	0	10
Maesteg	15	1	0	14	146	590	17	0	3

SECOND DIVISION: Abercynon 12 Whitland 25; Llantrisant 3 Ystradgynlais 3; Mountain Ash 42 Kenfig Hill 3; Rhymney 64 Pyle 0; Tenby Utd 29 Oakdale 23. Postponed: Narberth v Wrexham, St Peters v Llanharan.

Anglo-Welsh club match

Cardiff 40 Swansea 19

Cardiff: Tries: S Hill, S Moore, penalty try, Sullivan, Windo. Cons: Jarvis 3. Pens: Jarvis 3. Swansea: Try: Rees. Con: A Thomas. Pens: A Thomas 4

Tennent's Velvet Cup

Fifth round

Heriot's FP 45 Perthshire 10

Heriot's FP: Tries: McVie 2, Boswell, A Dall, Keenan, Proctor, Ross. Cons: Ross 5. Perthshire: Tries: Binnie, J Walker

Langholm 16 Gala 39

Langholm: Tries: A Johnstone, Paxton. Pens: Park 2. Gala: Tries: C Townsend 2, Brown, C Patterson, T Weir. Cons: C Patterson 4. Pens: C Patterson 2

Preston Lodge 33 Peebles 23

Preston Lodge: Tries: S Gilfillan, Payne, M Robertson, Wear. Cons: Sim 2. Pens: Sim 3. Peebles: Tries: Farmer 2, Nisbet. Con: Nisbet. Pens: Nisbet 2

Stewartry 25 Kirkcaldy 22

Stewartry: Tries: Bryson 2, penalty try. Cons: Wallace 2. Pens: Wallace 2. Kirkcaldy: Tries: Carruthers, S Hannah, Herrington, N Renton. Con: J Mitchell

Watsonians 0 Melrose 33

Tries: Laurie 2, Nichol 2, Broughton, Henderson. Pen: Morris

POSTPONED: Glasgow Hawks v Kelso, Hawick v Boroughmuir, Kilmarnock v Musselburgh

Tennent's Velvet Bowl

First round

Hamilton Acads	15	Whitecraigs	0

Second round

Edinburgh Univ	41	Paisley	0
Highland	13	Garnock	15
Hillfoots	39	Moray	8
RAF Kinloss	5	Strathendrick	50
Wigtownshire	5	Corstorphine	65

POSTPONED: Cumbernauld v Dumfries, Forrester FP v Duns

Tennent's Velvet Shield

Second round

Annan	26	Ross High	10
Berwick	99	Lenzie	8
Irvine	5	Hawick Linden	20
Selkirk	96	Howe of Fife	0
St Boswells	11	Glenrothes	5

POSTPONED: Stirling County v Stewart's Mel FP, Glasgow Southern v Gordonians, Jed-Forest v Dunfermline

TENNENT'S VELVET PREMIERSHIP: Third division: East Kilbride 22 Grangemouth 15

AIB League

First division

Blackrock Coll	15	Clontarf	28
Buccaneers	11	St Marys	10
Garryowen	24	Cork Const	22
Lansdowne	26	Galwegians	22
Young Munster	9	Shannon	10

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lansdowne	5	4	0	1	92	66	8
Ballymena	3	3	0	0	86	33	6
Garryowen	4	3	0	1	99	55	6
Buccaneers	4	3	0	1	69	74	6
St Marys	5	2	0	3	82	76	4
Blackrock Coll	5	2	0	3	104	105	4
Young Munster	4	2	0	2	47	55	4
Clontarf	5	2	0	3	97	108	4
Shannon	3	2	0	1	39	56	4
Cork Const	4	1	0	3	76	82	2
Terenure	3	1	0	2	46	60	2
Galwegians	5	0	0	5	48	115	0

SECOND DIVISION: Bective Rangers 3 Old Crescent 21; Dolphin 23 Wanderers 25; Old Belvedere 9 DLSP 9; Old Wesley 12 Greystones 32. Postponed: Skerries v Portadown, UCC v Sunday's Well.

WINTER SPORTS

Alpine skiing

CHLADMING, Austria: Men's World Cup super-G: 1, B Raich (Austria) 2min 27.02sec (1.12.89, 1.14.13), 2, M von Grunigen (Switz) 2.27.07 (1.12.46, 1.14.61), 3, H Maier (Austria) 2.27.43 (1.13.27, 1.14.16); 4, K-A Aamodt (Nor) 2.27.77 (1.13.02, 1.14.75), 5, H Knauss (Austria) 2.27.95 (1.12.66, 1.15.29); 6, S Locher (Switz) 2.28.14 (1.13.18, 1.14.96); 7, S Eberharter (Austria) 2.28.15 (1.13.07, 1.15.08), 8, A Schifferer (Austria) 2.28.16 (1.13.39, 1.14.77), 9, F Nyberg (Swe) 2.28.28 (1.13.47, 1.14.81), 10, J Strobl (Austria) 2.28.51 (1.13.39, 1.15.12). World Cup giant slalom positions: 1, Von Grunigen 283pts, 2, C Mayer (Austria) 261, 3, P Holzer (It) 254, 4, Eberharter 231; 5, Maier 221, 6, Aamodt 194, 7, Raich 186, 8, Knauss 161, 9, Kjus 127, 10, Locher 126. Overall World Cup positions: 1, Maier 811pts, 2, Aamodt 603, 3, L Kjus (Nor) 592; 4, Eberharter 564, 5, Mayer 553, 6, Knauss 454; 7, Von Grunigen 391, 8, Raich 346, 9, Schifferer 341, 10, J Kosir (Slovakia) 335

Biathlon

OBERHOF, Germany: World Cup: Women (10km) 1, L Grete Skjelbreid (Nor) 34min 20.4sec (four penalty laps after shooting), 2, O Zubrilova (Ukr) +0.16.4 (2), 3, M Forsberg (Swe) +0.23.1 (1), 4, P Wagenluehr (Ger) +0.46.5 (1); 5, U Disl (Ger) +0.52.8 (5), 6, N Santer (It) +1.06.6 (2), 7, A Henkel (Ger) +1.10.5 (3), 8, A E Skjelbreid (Nor) +1.12.5 (2), 9, N Lemesch (Ukr) +1.13.2 (1), 10, C Niogret (Fr) +1.14.9 (2). World Cup positions (after eight events) 1, Disl 197pts, 2, Forsberg 191, 3, S Greiner-Petter-Memm (Ger) 158, 4, L G Skjelbreid (Nor) 149; 5, Niogret 121, 6, Henkel 119; 7, A Achatowa (Russ) 111, 8, A E Skjelbreid (Nor) 104, 9, K Apel (Ger) 100, 10, Zellner (Ger) 97. Men (4 x 7.5km relay) 1, Germany (R Gross, P Sendel, S Fischer, F Luck) 1hr 21min 31.5sec (0 penalty laps after the shooting), 2, Russia (S Roschkov, V Dratschev, V Kunayev, V Malgurov) +42.05 (0), 3, Norway (E Gjelland, S Glimsdal, F Andresen, H Hanevold) +1.27.8 (2), 4, Belarus +1.47.5 (1), 5, France +2.40.4 (1), 6, Slovenia +2.57.3 (0), 7, Poland +3.10.7 (0), 8, Czech Republic +3.34.9 (2), 9, Japan +5.37.1 (1), 10, Ukraine +5.58.0 (1). Women (4 x 7.5km relay): 1, Germany (U Disl, S Greiner-Petter-Memm, A Henkel, M Zellner) 1hr 34min 19.2sec (one penalty lap after shooting), 2, Russia (A Wolkova, O Romasko, A Achalova, N Talanova) +0.54.0 (0), 3, France (D Heymann-Burlet, E Claret, A Briand, C Niogret) +1.19.7 (2), 4, Ukraine +2.23.6 (2), 5, Czech Republic +4.04.2 (2), 6, Poland +4.38.6 (2), 7, Bulgaria +5.31.1 (4), 8, Belarus +5.32.2 (2), 9, Japan +5.54.3 (3). Disqualified: Kazakhstan and Slovenia. Did not take part: Norway

Figure skating

TOKYO: Honda Lev Cup (one-day international) Women: 1, M Kwan (US) 1.5 total factored placings, 2, M Butyrskaya (Russ) 3.0; 3, I Slutskaya (Russ) 4.5; 4, Y Sato (Japan) 6.0, 5, F Suguri (Japan) 7.5, 6, C Kadavy (US) 9.0. Men: 1, Y Plushenko (Russ) 1.5; 2, A Yagudin (Russ) 3.5, 3, T Eldredge (US) 4.0; 4, K Browning (Can) 6.5; 5, T Honda (Japan) 7.0, 6, B Orser (Can) 9.0. Pairs: 1, E Berezhnaya and A Sikharulidze (Russ) 1.5, 2, M Woetzel and I Steuer (Ger) 3.0; 3, K Ina and J Zimmerman (US) 4.5. Dance: 1, M Usova and E Platov (Russ) 2.0; 2, M Drobiazko and P Vanagas (Lith) 4.0; 3, N Tsuzuki (Japan) and R Farkhoutdinov (Russ) 6.0

Speed skating

HEERENVEEN, Holland: European Championship event: Men: 1,500m: 1, R Ritsma (Holl) 1min 49.18sec, 2, A Sondral (Nor) 1:50.08, 3, I Postma (Holl) 1.50.36, 4, D Shepel (Russ) 1:50.64, 5, M Hersman (Holl) 1.51.03, 6, C Kuentz (Fr) 1.51.05, 7, C Breuer (Ger) 1.51.06, 8, R Sighel (It) 1.51.20; 9, M DeMonte (It) 1.51.54, 10, V Sayutin (Russ) 1.51.58. 10,000m: 1, B Veldkamp (Bel) 13.29.81; 2, F Dittrich (Ger) 13.38.71; 3, B Rykkje (Nor) 13.40.89, 4, K Storelid (Nor) 13.45.41, 5, V Sayutin (Russ) 13.47.50. Women: 1,500m: 1, A Thomas (Holl) 1.58.37; 2, T de Jong (Holl) 1.59.41, 3, C Pechstein (Ger) 2.00.18, 4, E Hunyady (Austria) 2.01.07, 5, G Niemann-Stirnemann (Ger) 2.01.21, 6, B de Loor (Holl) 2.01.86, 7, R Groenewold (Holl) 2.02.47, 8, U Adeberg (Ger) 2.02.67, 9, D Anschutz (Ger) 2.02.88. 3,000m: 1, G Niemann-Stirnemann (Ger) 4.08.40, 2, T de Jong (Holl) 4.08.70, 3, C Pechstein (Ger) 4.09.66, 4, A-M Thomas (Holl) 4.11.70, 5, B de Loor (Holl) 4.13.15; 6, R Groenewold (Holl) 4.13.61; 7, V Barisheva (Russ) 4.17.26, 8, E Hunyady (Austria) 4.17.98, 9, D Anschutz (Ger) 4.19.71, 10, U Adeberg (Ger) 4.20.33. 5,000m: 1, Niemann-Stirnemann 7min 3.35sec, 2, Pechstein 7.06.09, 3, T de Jong (Holl) 7.07.44, 4, De Loor 7.07.49, 5, Groenewold 7.17.76, 6, Thomas 7.18.71.6

Nordic skiing

PLESO, Slovakia: World Cup combined event (ski jumping and a 15km cross-country race). 1, B E Vik (Nor) 39min 57.5sec in cross-country, 244.0pts in ski jumping, 2, K Braaten (Nor) at 32.9sec/235.5, 3, F Gottwald (Austria) 1.17.6/222.0, 4, T Lodwick (US) 1.29.6/224.0; 5, S Lajunen (Fin) 1.47.6/231.0; 6, F Boerre Lundberg (Nor) 2.11.0/218.0, 7, J Taljus (Fin) 2.21.1/237.5, 8, A Hartmann (Switz) 2.50.0/229.0, 9, M Kucera (Cz) 2.55.6/228.5, 10, K T Apeland (Nor) 3.00.3/205.0. Leading overall positions (after nine events): 1, Vik 1,105pts, 2, Manninen (Fin) 1,002; 3, Gottwald 667, 4, Lajunen 581, 5, Hartmann 555, 6, Lodwick 497, 7, L Rygl (Cz) 497, 8, D Sinitzyn (Russ) 484, 9, K Braaten (Nor) 480, 10, A Fadeev (Russ) 465

NOVE MESTO NA MORAVE, Czech Republic: World cup cross-country: Men (15km): 1, B Daehlie (Nor) 42min 27.4sec, 2, E Jevne (Nor) 42.47.1, 3, E Bjervig (Nor) 42.58.1, 4, F May (It) 42.58.6, 5, P Elofsson (Swe) 42.58.9; 6, M Fredriksson (Swe) 43.02.2; 7, I Batory (Slovakia) 43.11.3, 8, O-B Hjelmeseth (Nor) 43.40.7, 9, V Vittoz (Fr) 43.42.7, 10, K Hietamaki (Fin) 43.45.7. Leading overall positions: 1, Daehlie 480pts; 2, Fredriksson 348, 3, Bjervig 280; 4, Elofsson 267; 5, M Botwinov (Austria) 236; 6, Jevne 204, 7, J Isometsa (Fin) 200, 8, M Myllyla (Fin) 169; 9, A Bergstroem (Swe) 143; 10, Batory 135. Women (10km): 1, B Martinsen (Nor) 30min 57.4sec; 2, K Neumannova (Cz) 31.00.5, 3, S Nageikina (Russ) 31.22.9, 4, S Belmondo (It) 31.26.1, 5, N Gavriljuk (Russ) 31.37.0, 6, K Smigun (Est) 31.47.2; 7, J Tchepalova (Russ) 31.48.3; 8, A Reztsova (Russ) 32.00.6, 9, A Moen (Nor) 32.02.6, 10, E Nilsen (Nor) 32.10.1. Leading overall positions: 1, Martinsen 494pts, 2, Neumannova 410, 3, Gavriljuk 311, 4, A Ordina (Swe) 283, 5, O Danilova (Russ) 282, 6, Smigun 275, 7, Belmondo 268, 8, L Lazutina (Russ) 215, 9, Nageikina 202, 10, Reztsova 181

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

Davis runs Denver close to the top prize

By Our Sports Staff

THE Denver Broncos moved to within one victory of a return to the Super Bowl with a 38-3 win over the Miami Dolphins on Saturday. The reigning champions will host the American Football Conference (AFC) title game on January 17 against either the New York Jets or the Jacksonville Jaguars for a trip to the game's showpiece on January 31.

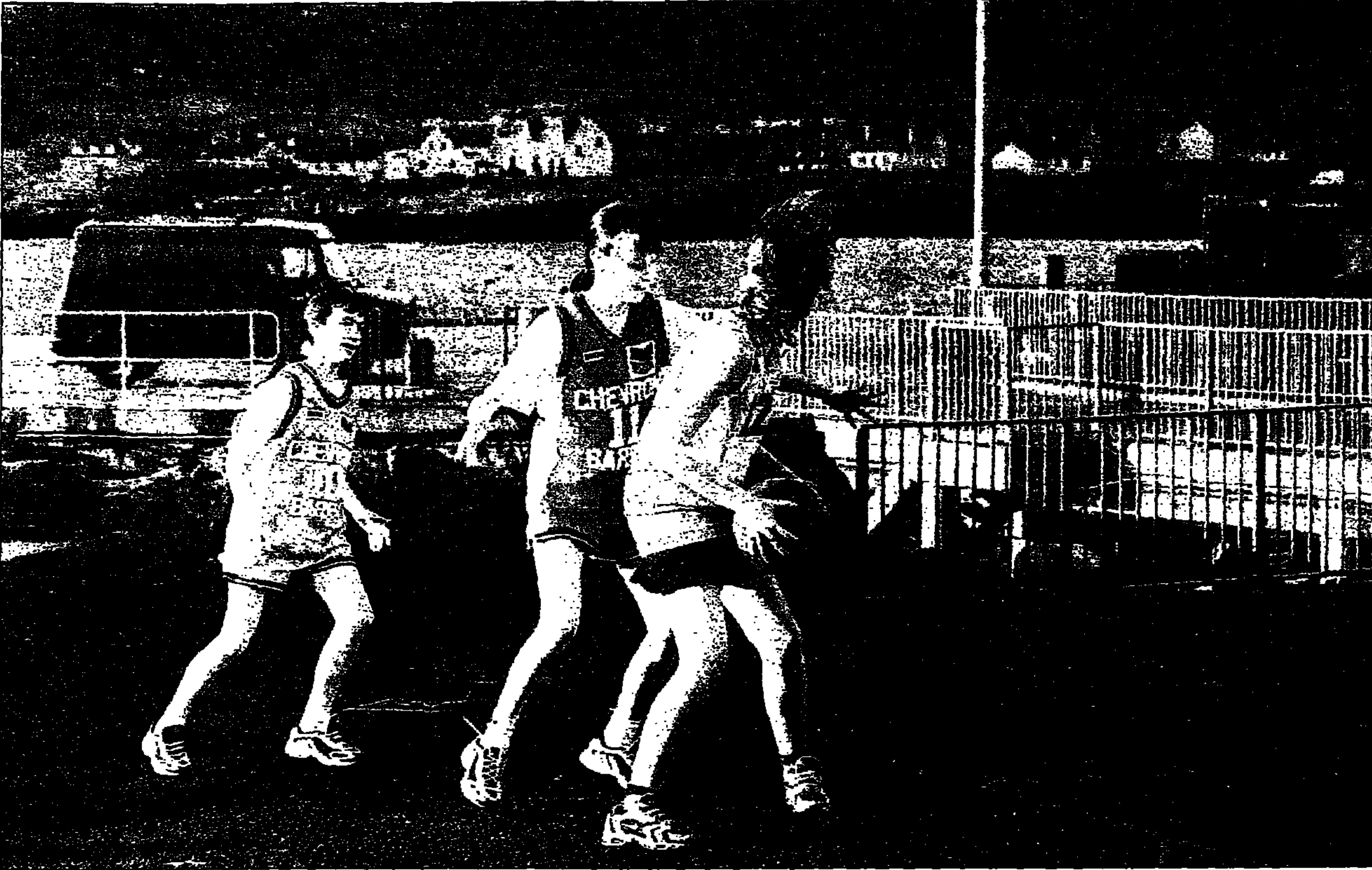
Terrell Davis, the National Football League (NFL) rushing champion, who was kept to a season-low 29 yards by the Dolphins defence in December, ran for 199 yards and two touchdowns to spark the rout. He scored twice in the first quarter after runs of one and 20 yards and Derek Loville added another on an 11-yard break in the second quarter to give Denver a 21-3 lead at half-time.

Early in the third quarter, Davis raced 62 yards to set up Jason Elam's 32-yard field goal and complete the fourth-best rushing performance in NFL play-off history. In the final quarter, Rod Smith caught a 28-yard touchdown pass from John Elway, the Denver quarterback, and Neil Smith returned a fumble 79 yards to complete the victory.

Dan Marino, the Miami quarterback, was unable to recapture the form that saw him throw for 355 yards and four touchdowns in Miami's regular-season triumph over Denver. He threw for 243 yards, but was intercepted three times, in contrast to Elway, who threw for 182 yards and a touchdown.

The Atlanta Falcons survived a late flourish by the San Francisco 49ers to book their first-ever appearance in the National Football Conference (NFC) championship game with a 20-18 win at the Georgia Dome. Atlanta, who had won only two play-off games in their 33-year history, beat the five-times Super Bowl champions in style, with Jamal Anderson rushing for 113 yards and two touchdowns.

After Atlanta achieved their tenth consecutive victory, Dan Reeves, the coach, said: "To get to this point is beyond our wildest dreams, but now we have got a chance," he said. "We just need to take it to the next step."



Girls of Castlebay Community School practise on the dockside before setting off from Barra for another basketball trip to the mainland that involves many hours of travel

Living a Hebridean hoop dream

Coll Macdougall explains why isolation is proving no sporting barrier to the children of Barra

SPORT IN SCHOOLS

Morvern MacLeod, an Edinburgh student who is a leading member of Scotland's women's basketball team, was taught her basic skills far from the capital, for she is a native of Barra, the southernmost island of the Outer Hebrides.

Basketball was unknown on the island until it was introduced at Castlebay Community School by John MacCallum, the sole physical education teacher, a decade ago. Until that time, PE was a very basic subject, taught in the Church of Scotland Fishermen's Rest. With the completion of a games hall and a swimming pool, a new era opened up for the 105 pupils in the senior secondary department.

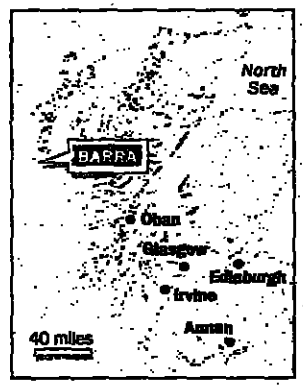
MacCallum is not native to the island but moved there a quarter of a century ago. He and his family had fallen in love with the quality of life there after a holiday on the windswept dot in the Atlantic where crofting, fishing and tourism are the economic mainstays. Today, there is a good range of sporting activities for the pupils, including football, swimming, cross-country running, sailing, windsurfing, canoeing and the traditional Celtic game of shinty, which has been successfully re-introduced — but basketball is the sport that has brought success and respect to the school.

Initially, when Castlebay entered national competitions, it was the boys who collected trophies, despite having to endure a five-hour ferry trip to the mainland followed by a minibus journey of at least 100 miles before reaching a competition venue.

Looking back to those days, MacCallum said: "I quickly realised that teams could not give of their best after such a long period of travel. Now I arrange that we leave home in the early hours of Friday morning to arrive in Oban, the mainland ferry port, around 8am. We then board a minibus to head to places such as Annan, Irvine or Edinburgh. When we arrive, we have a rest before playing a friendly match and relaxing for the rest of the day. We play our competitions on Saturdays and travel home the following day."

Teenage boys are few in number on the island at present and so the girls have had to take over responsibility for preserving the school's envied basketball reputation — but there are not too many of them, either. The under-15 team has only seven possible participants and all seven make up the team. At under-14 level, the situation is better, allowing competition for team places.

Each trip to the mainland costs between £350 and £400. This is funded by a grant from the Western Isles Council minibus fund, school funds and a personal contribution from each player of between £15 and £20. However, there are additional educational benefits



from these forays to the mainland, as Katie Beggs, 14, pointed out. "We learn a lot about the geography of Scotland, about the lifestyles of opposing teams and about ourselves."

MacCallum agrees. There is a confident air and a pleasing degree of articulacy about the normally reticent island children. Despite none of the girls being 6ft 7in giants, they have enjoyed numerous successes over the years and most trips go smoothly — although, occasionally, there are hitches, as McCallum explained.

"One winter's night, we were returning to Oban to catch a late-night ferry when our minibus broke down in snow 25 miles from the port. I managed to get transport for the children, but knew I had to get the vehicle running again and back to Oban. This took quite some time and I expected to miss the ferry. However, the children staged a sit-down on the gangway and refused to budge until I had arrived. Fortunately, the crew, mostly islanders, were very tolerant of the youngsters and did nothing to forceably remove them. I was astonished at their loyalty to me, but it made everything I've done for them so much more worthwhile."

NETBALL

Powerful Linden ease past rivals

By Cathy Harris

LINDEN'S position at the top of the table was never in danger as they cruised to a 65-19 victory over Harborne, their local rivals, to maintain their unbeaten run in the national clubs league yesterday.

Rarely threatened, the champions comfortably won each quarter and effectively killed off the contest when they took the third quarter 19-2. Sandra Turner, from Ireland, and Lisa Topliss, of England, Linden's two former internationals, shared the goalscoring for their team, which dominated completely, despite being without Olivia Murphy.

The bronze medal-winner at the Commonwealth Games was attending an England training weekend, but the Birmingham side are resigned to the fact that Murphy will miss the rest of the club season. Murphy is one of four players who leave for New Zealand next month after accepting invitations to play in a club cup competition. The other three are Naomi Siddall, Amanda Newton and Helen Lonsdale.

Outstanding displays by Tracey Horton, the Tongham goalkeeper, and Caroline Horne, the shooter, saw the newcomers send Wyvern sliding to a disappointing 47-50 defeat. Missing Chrissie Maskell and Michelle Stewart, both England squad members, and with Debbie Savery, their shooter, taken ill, Wyvern were always struggling to seize the initiative.

Rose St Louis and Cathy Deplessis, the Hirondelles defenders, played a full game together for the first time as the Surrey club beat Academy 53-45. Gilly Staines, normally a defender for Surrey, scored 16 goals and Helen Skartek's 37 goals steered the team to victory.

Hirondelles move up to second spot, ahead of Wyvern, after Oakwood staged a magnificent late recovery to beat New Cambell 64-60. Trailing 44-51 going in to the last quarter, the Middlesex side threw a succession of long passes to Lesley Isaacs, the goal shooter, who converted the chances with unerring accuracy to send the former league winners to a second defeat.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By Robert Sheehan, Bridge Correspondent

This is an entertaining deal involving four of the best players in the TGR high game.

Dealer West — N-S game — Rubber bridge

North: ♠ Q J 8 7 6 ♡ 5 3 ◇ 10 9 8 2 ♣ A K

West: ♠ A K 10 9 4 ♡ A K 9 8 7 6 ◇ 4 ♣ 9

East: ♠ 5 3 2 ♡ Q 10 4 2 ◇ K 7 6 5 ♣ Q 8

South: ♠ – ♡ J ◇ A Q J 3 ♣ J 10 7 6 5 4 3 2

W	N	E	S
Courtney	Hallberg	Brinig	Simpson
2 H	Pass	3 H	3 S
Double	Pass	4 H	Pass
4 NT	Pass	5 C	Pass
5 H	5 S	Double	6 C
Double	All Pass		

Contract: Six Clubs doubled, by South. Lead: ace of spades.

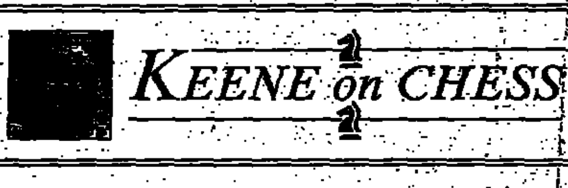
After West's Acol Two Heart opening, what do you think East should bid? Traditionally a single raise is forcing and shows a side ace and/or the king of trumps. On that basis East should bid Four Hearts on the first round, showing some trump support and a few bits and pieces, but denying an ace.

South tried Three Spades over Three Hearts to draw a spade lead against a high heart contract. It looks a risky manoeuvre to me – in some auctions South will not have the chance to show his clubs conveniently. However, as the auction developed North only showed his spade support at the five level, so South was able to get out into Six Clubs.

I don't think West should double that. West knows East has no aces after his response to Blackwood. West also knows that North has length in spades, as he has bid Five Spades even after South has been doubled in Three Spades. Hence the news that South is void in spades comes over quite clearly. It is still possible South might be losing a heart and a minor-suit trick, but even so I think West should pass. As it happens, the winning action for East-West is to sacrifice in Six Hearts.

There is a point of technique in the play of Six Clubs, which I will discuss tomorrow.

□ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.



By Raymond Keene, Chess Correspondent

Sokolov's victory

Ivan Sokolov dominated the Hastings Premier tournament winning by a clear two points over the rest of the field. In the final round he defeated James Plaskett.

White: Ivan Sokolov
Black: James Plaskett
Hastings Premier 1999
English Defence

1	d4	e6
2	c4	b6
3	Nc3	Bb4
4	e3	Bb7
5	Nge2	f5
6	a3	Bd6
7	b4	Nf6
8	c5	Be7
9	Nf4	a5
10	Bb2	axb4
11	axb4	Rxa1
12	Bxa1	Nc6
13	b5	Na5
14	c6	Bc8
15	cxd7+	Qxd7
16	Be2	Bd6
17	Nh5	Nd5
18	0-0	Bb7
19	e4	fxe4
20	Nxe4	0-0
21	Bg4	Qxb5
22	Bxe6+	Kh8
23	Re1	Bb4
24	Qg4	g6
25	Qg5	Bxe1
26	Qe5+	Rf6
27	Nexf6	Nc4
28	Qxe1	gxh5
29	Bd7	Black resigns

The final results

1st, Sokolov (7 points out of 9 games); 2nd equal, Sadler, Emms, Speelman, Ponomariov and Shipov (all 5 points); 7th equal, Plaskett, Fressinet and Miles (all 3.5 points); 10th, Saltaev (2.5 points).

Amateur champion

Jessie Gilbert, 11, has become the youngest-ever winner of an adult title by taking the women's section of the amateur world championship, which finished at Hastings on Friday.

In achieving this feat, she defeated opposition from 13 countries. This follows two excellent results when Jessie won the London under-12 and under-14 titles after Christmas. As a result of her achievement in taking the senior world title, Jessie has beome a last-minute nominee to the list of candidates for the Brain Trust Charity's brain of the year award, with a £20,000 first prize.

Other nominees include Anatoly Karpov, the champion of Fide, the world chess federation; Andi Bell, the reigning world memory champion; and John Glenn, the American astronaut. The award ceremony takes place in London on Friday.

Keene online

You can send me your queries, puzzles, problems and games direct by e-mail. The address is keenechess@aol.com. The best contributions will be published here or in the Saturday Times Weekend column.

Times book

The Times Winning Moves 2 contains 240 chess puzzles from international grandmaster Raymond Keene's daily column in The Times, and is available now from bookshops or from B.T. Batsford Ltd (tel: 01797 369966 at £6.99 plus postage and packing).

□ Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

HUTUNG
a. A throw in ju-jitsu
b. Raw fish
c. An alley

MAESTRIA
a. Musical direction: sadly
b. Skill
c. The swamps around Rome

MORAN
a. Warriors
b. A defensive ditch
c. An ancient shin-pad

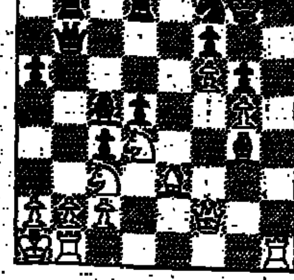
NUNC STANS
a. Now
b. A menhir
c. A Masonic shibboleth

Answers on page 46

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Liss-Mashian, Tel Aviv, 1998. Here, White would like to continue 1. Qh2 or 1. Qh4 and give mate along the h-file. However, Black meets both of those tries with 1 ... Bh5. How can White subtly improve on this?



Solution on page 46

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES 0171-782 7344

PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE OFFSHORE PETROLEUM AND PIPE-LINES (ASSESSMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS) REGULATIONS 1998 CHISWICK PROSPECT

[illegible] ... marked "Project WM11/1998" and addressed to Mr. Barry Comber at, Oil and Gas Directorate Department of Trade and Industry 1 Victoria Street London SW1H 0ET

LEGAL NOTICES

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In the matter of Nippon Oil Exploration ... [illegible]

Baraka Interaction (UK) Limited ... [illegible]

FRANKFURT CONSULT (UK) LIMITED ... [illegible]

IN THE MATTER OF BIG STAR MAIL-ORDER LIMITED AND IN THE MATTER OF THE INSOLVENCY ACT 1986 ... [illegible]

The Insolvency Act 1986 PNEUMATIC POWER (UK) LIMITED (In Liquidation) ... [illegible]

MYA SERVICES LIMITED ... [illegible]

THE INSOLVENCY RULES 1986 ... [illegible]

هكذا من الأصل

Capitalisation, week's change

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

[illegible]

BANKS

[illegible]

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

[illegible]

BUILDING MATERIALS

[illegible]

CHEMICALS

[illegible]

CONSTRUCTION

[illegible]

DISTRIBUTORS

[illegible]

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

[illegible]

ELECTRICITY

[illegible]

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

[illegible]

ENGINEERING

[illegible]

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

[illegible]

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

[illegible]

HEALTHCARE

[illegible]

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

[illegible]

INSURANCE

[illegible]

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

[illegible]

LEISURE & HOTELS

[illegible]

MEDIA

[illegible]

MINING

[illegible]

OIL & GAS

[illegible]

OTHER FINANCIAL

[illegible]

PHARMACEUTICALS

[illegible]

PRINTING & PAPER

[illegible]

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[illegible]

RETAILERS, FOOD

[illegible]

RETAILERS, GENERAL

[illegible]

SUPPORT SERVICES

[illegible]

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

[illegible]

TRANSPORT

[illegible]

WATER

[illegible]

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

[illegible]

SHORTS (under 5 years)

[illegible]

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

[illegible]

LONGS (over 15 years)

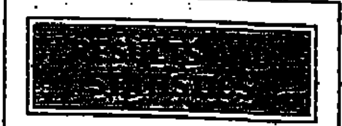
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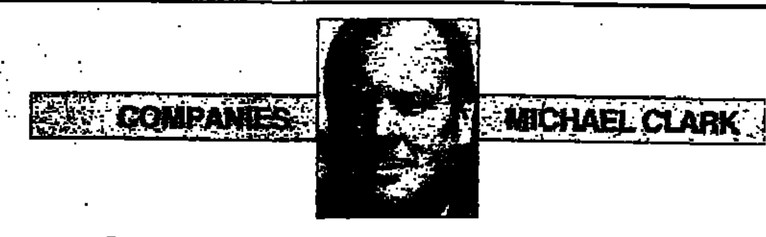
UNDATED

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INDEX-LINKED

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Dixons offers high street clues

DIXONS GROUP: Half-year results due on Wednesday from the electrical consumer goods retailer will be a highlight of the week for those seeking clues as to the state of high street spending.

Brokers expect what, at first sight, will appear to be a flat performance from Dixons, with pre-tax profits either little changed or slightly down on the £77.6 million achieved during the corresponding period last year. The payout to shareholders is expected to grow from 2.9p to 3.35p.

However, these results compare with a strong performance last year that saw the company, whose chairman is Sir Stanley Kalms, benefit from the various building society demutualisation windfalls.

Any benefits from recent interest rate cuts are unlikely to materialise until the second half, or early in the group's next financial year.

Close attention will obviously be paid to any comments made by the group about Christmas trading. Like-for-like sales last year were down about 4 per cent, with sales of personal computers proving dull.

This time analysts are forecasting a rise of between 3 per cent and 4 per cent, although Nick Bubb, of SG Securities, the broker, admits that there is scope for disappointment.

Mr Bubb is looking for pre-tax profits of £74.5 million, which falls around the middle of the range as far as most forecasts from City analysts are concerned.

Retailing generally is likely to have been dull, with the bulk of any growth achieved coming from a wide range of new products, ranging from mobile telephones to personal computers and fax machines.

Sales of personal computers enjoyed useful growth in the second half of last year and the momentum will have been carried over into the six months under review. This growth will have been achieved against a backdrop of lacklustre competition and of price deflation, which will have put pressure on margins.

The number of subscribers for the group's Freeserve Internet joint venture with Energis is expected to have grown to about one million, although the financial benefits to Dixons may be somewhat limited at this stage.

At the last count, Dixons had about £500 million in the bank, and brokers maintain that the abolition of advance corporation tax may provide scope for a redistribution among shareholders.



Sir Stanley Kalms, a leading figure in Business for Sterling, rings up Dixons's results on Wednesday

TOMKINS: Half-year results from the guns to buns group, due to be published today, should show pre-tax profits of between £225 million and £235 million. That compares with profits of £214.9 million last time.

SG Securities, the broker, is looking for the group's half-time pre-tax profits to emerge at about £230 million.

Back in November, Tomkins issued an update on its trading and described it as being "in line with expectations". The company said that its aim was to expand both organically and through acquisition. Despite this, brokers have been reducing their profit forecasts of late, in response to a slowdown in industrial and automotive markets.

The consensus for the group's full year to April 1999 is now pitched at about £525 million, compared with £530 million previously.

Brokers will want to establish what impact last year's strike at General Motors has had on the Tomkins automotive division, which takes in Gates and Stant, the makers of windscreen wiper blades and engine-timing belts.

Analysts will also be looking hard at the Rank Hovis McDougall baking and milling division after a period of softening commodity prices and reduced demand.

Apart from the figures, the City will want to know what the company has in mind regarding its acquisition programme.

Tomkins has intimated that it is prepared to spend between £500 million and £700 million on various acquisitions.

The group has already indicated its interest in buying parts of BTR's automotive parts business, should the division be put up for sale and if the proposed merger of BTR with Siebe is concluded.

An interim dividend of about 4p is expected, up from 3.5p.

STANLEY LEISURE: Brokers will be eager to discover what lies in store for the betting office and casino operator after it was fairly comprehensively outbid for the Corals betting chain.

Stanley is Britain's fourth-biggest bookmaker and has achieved a useful track record acquiring the smaller independent bookies. It certainly has the cash resources to make further acquisitions.

Merrill Lynch, the broker, is forecasting interim pre-tax profits of £11.7 million when the group reports on Thursday. That compares with £10.2 million for the corresponding period.

A strong performance is expected from the betting office chain, while casinos should have benefited from a useful increase in consumer spending.

Merrill is worried that sentiment towards the shares could be affected if the rival London Clubs succeeds this month in its application for a casino licence in Luton. This would bring London Clubs head to head against Stanley in an important area for the group.

The payout is expected to grow from 1.4p to 1.6p.

TODAY

Interims: Pace Micro Technology, Tomkins, Triad. **Finals:** Denmans Electrical, Fyffes, Hacas Group, PWS Holdings, RCO Holdings. **Economic statistics:** November industrial/manufacturing output, December producer price index, Confederation of British Industry fourth-quarter financial services summary, Institute of Directors quarterly business opinion survey.

TOMORROW

Interims: Bespak, Savills, Wyko Group. **Finals:** Bullough. **Economic statistics:** British Retail Consortium December retail sales monitor.

WEDNESDAY

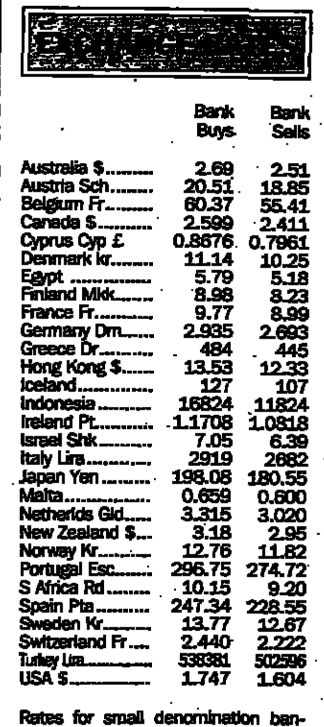
Interims: Dixons Group, FI Group, Helton Holdings, Vega Group. **Finals:** none scheduled. **Economic statistics:** December labour market report.

THURSDAY

Interims: Stanley Leisure. **Finals:** Greenwich Resources, ML Laboratories. **Economic statistics:** none scheduled.

FRIDAY

Interims: none scheduled. **Finals:** none scheduled. **Economic statistics:** none scheduled.



	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.69	2.51
Austria Sch	20.51	18.85
Belgium Fr	60.37	55.41
Canada $	2.599	2.411
Cyprus Cyp £	0.8676	0.7961
Denmark kr	11.14	10.25
Egypt	5.79	5.18
Finland Mkk	8.98	8.23
France Fr	9.77	8.99
Germany Dm	2.935	2.693
Greece Dr	484	445
Hong Kong $	13.53	12.33
Iceland	127	107
Indonesia	16824	11824
Ireland Pt	1.1708	1.0818
Israel Shk	7.05	6.39
Italy Lira	2919	2682
Japan Yen	198.08	180.55
Malta	0.659	0.600
Netherlds Gld	3.315	3.020
New Zealand $	3.18	2.95
Norway Kr	12.76	11.82
Portugal Esc	296.75	274.72
S Africa Rd	10.15	9.20
Spain Pta	247.34	228.55
Sweden Kr	13.77	12.67
Switzerland Fr	2.440	2.222
Turkey Lira	538381	502596
USA $	1.747	1.604

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading on Friday.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Jobs figures in spotlight

The Bank of England may only have cut rates last Thursday, but with the City convinced that further action is needed, the debate has already begun as to whether the Monetary Policy Committee will reduce rates again next month.

The vital statistics this week will be the Labour market data on Wednesday. The Bank said in a statement on Thursday that it now believed wages pressures are easing. Confirmation in this data that unemployment is beginning to rise rapidly will bolster hopes of a February cut. The market consensus is that the claimant count measure of unemployment will have risen by 10,000 in November, with the unemployment rate standing unchanged at 4.6 per cent.

Although there will be no average earnings data — the series is currently suspended — the City will interpret such a rise in unemployment as the definitive turning point in the labour market.

The industrial production and producer prices data, which are published today, will confirm the extent of the difficulties in the manufacturing sector. City economists, who are predicting that fourth-quarter GDP will show the first contraction since 1992, will cast a particularly keen eye on the data that are vital constituents of the GDP figures.

Analysts expect manufacturing output to record a fall of 0.3 per cent between October and November, ensuring the annual rate of growth shows a contraction for the second consecutive month. Overall industrial production is expected to show a small 0.4 per cent annual rise.

The producer prices data should show raw material prices continuing to decline, with input prices down by 8.3 per cent compared with December the previous year. Factory gate prices are expected to show no annual growth, having risen by 0.2 per cent between November and December.

The BRC sales monitor, to be published tomorrow, should confirm the mixed Christmas performance on the high street.

ALASDAIR MURRAY

SUNDAY TIPS

The Sunday Times: Buy Savills, Gresham Computing. *The Sunday Telegraph*: Buy Scottish Radio Holdings, Peterhouse Group, TT Group. *The Mail on Sunday*: Buy J Sainsbury, Great Universal Stores, Scottish & Southern Energy, Racal Electronics. *The Express on Sunday*: Buy Anite, Luminar, Siebe, Planit.

Knitwear firms face heavy casualties from 'banana war'

By Carl Mortished, International Business Editor

THE Scottish knitwear industry is being threatened with mass redundancies because of a trade dispute between Europe and the United States over the import of bananas.

Knitwear firms are already feeling the effects of a threat by the US to impose punitive tariffs on a list of European imports, which include cashmere pullovers. The hard-pressed Borders firms could lose up to 900 jobs from the imposition of 100 per cent duty on imports into the US.

Britain's Trade Minister, Brian Wilson, reckons the UK could lose £82 million of exports from the US action, which has been launched in retaliation to the EU's banana regime, labelled discriminatory by Washington. He said: "The biggest single category is cashmere knitwear."

In an effort to head off a tit-for-tat trade war, Brussels is calling for a panel meeting at a summit of the World Trade Organisation in Geneva on Tuesday. Mr Wilson said: "Britain is supporting a fast-track adjudication procedure. I am acutely aware of the problems faced, through no fault of their own, by companies which export products on the American list. Every effort is being made to head off implementation of the threatened retaliation."

Clan Douglas, a knitwear firm, is already suffering, with a US order worth £1.5 million on hold pending a decision by Washington to proceed with the sanctions.

The US has been fighting for at least a decade what it believes is an illegal quota system favouring banana producers from former EU colonies in the Caribbean and Africa.

The Americans claim that the quota system discriminates against producers from Central America. Although the US produces no bananas, it has a huge financial interest in Central and South American produce because of the influence of US multinationals, such as Chiquita Brands and Dole.

In 1997 it achieved a victory when a WTO panel ruled against the EU regime, but Washington still believes that a reform package put together in Brussels is inadequate. In December the US published a list of products, ranging from Pecorino cheese to chandeliers, that would be targeted with 100 per cent tariffs.

Mr Wilson said: "We are urging the United States to think again before it is too late, drop its threatened action and pursue its case through the WTO."

The US has been resisting suggestions by the EU that the new regime be referred to a WTO panel because the procedure could take the best part of a year.

However, EU officials believe that the US threat amounts to illegal unilateral action. The US is required to request authorisation for its retaliatory action after January 21. However, Brussels has attempted to pre-empt US action by the unusual step of asking the WTO to review its banana regime in an accelerated 90-day procedure.



The US plans action to help Central American banana producers

CHANGE ON WEEK

US Dollar
1.6401 (−0.0239)
Euro
0.7040 (n/a)
Exchange index
99.2 (−0.5)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

FT 30 share
3663.1 (+111.8)
FTSE 100
6147.2 (+264.6)
New York Dow Jones
9643.32 (+453.91)
Tokyo Nikkei Avge
13391.81 (−450.36)

OFT rejects calls for loan rates ceiling

By Gavin Lumsden

JOHN BRIDGEMAN, Director-General of Fair Trading, has rejected calls for the introduction of a statutory maximum rate of interest to protect the poor from exploitation from loan sharks and other unscrupulous lenders.

The lack of an official definition of what is an extortionate interest rate will dissappoint pressure groups that have lobbied the Office of Fair Trading to introduce such a measure during its year-long inquiry into how the poor and other vulnerable people are treated by the financial services industry.

However, Mr Bridgeman is preparing to make other recommendations when the OFT report is published on Wednesday. These will be aimed at helping low earners and people from ethnic minorities as well as the disabled and elderly to get good value financial service and advice.

One of the factors behind the report is the fact that one in five people in the UK is unable to get bank accounts. As a result people are rejected by credit card and insurance companies and are more likely to turn to back street lenders.

The Money Advice Association (MMA) has long been alarmed by the activities of door-to-door lenders operating in many of the country's most deprived communities. It believes a statutory interest rate ceiling is essential to stop people being sucked into loans that sometimes end up charging an annual percentage rate (APR) of 3,000 per cent.

Dr Evan Harris, Liberal Democrat MP for Oxford West and Abingdon, is planning to table an early day motion in the House of Commons later this month calling for a ceiling to be set.

John Lammerdee of the Consumer Credit Association dismissed the MAA's figures as scaremongering.



Bridgeman: recommendations for good value financial service

THE FACTS

Turnover: £3.5 billion.
Pre-tax profit: £740 million; market cap, £6.4 billion; employees, 4,300.
Overview: Britain's biggest non-nuclear generator, National Power has a strong international presence. It has been spending overseas as its domestic market is squeezed by competitors and government demands that it sells some power stations.
Brands: National Power, Midlands Electricity.

THE BOARD

Sir John Collins took over the chairmanship of National Power last year from John Baker, who had moved on from an occasionally controversial spell as chief executive. Sir John, who was until 1993 chairman and chief executive of Shell UK, is a director of BSkyB and of NM Rothschild and is chairman of Cantab Pharmaceuticals.

Keith Henry became chief executive in 1995, after being recruited from Brown & Root, of which he was chief executive. He is a non-executive director of Enterprise Oil.

Roger Witcomb, finance director, has been with the generator since 1990, when he joined the company from BP. Another recruit from BP is **Graham Brown**, commercial director. He managed BP's crude oil and products trading division before joining National Power in 1994.

Brian Count, operations and technology director, rose through the ranks of the pre-privatised Central Electricity Generating Board. He was appointed to National Power's board three years ago.

Andrew Swanson is National Power's company secretary.

Max Herbert is an international director, for the Asia Pacific region, and **Peter Windsor** is international director for the western hemisphere.

National Power's non-executive directors include: **Sir Alastair Morton**, the former chairman of Eurotunnel and the new railway tsar; and **Brandon Gough**, the man brought in by Yorkshire Water to shake things up after its poor performance during the 1995 drought.

CORPORATE

When National Power recently put up for sale its giant Drax power station, a sea change was signalled for the once-mighty generator.

Here was a company that, just after privatisation, commanded 46 per cent of English and Welsh power production and is now dressing up its biggest and best plant for disposal.

The move, ordered by the Government, will leave National Power with about 12 to 13 per cent of electricity output after one of the most dramatic losses of market share suffered by any business.

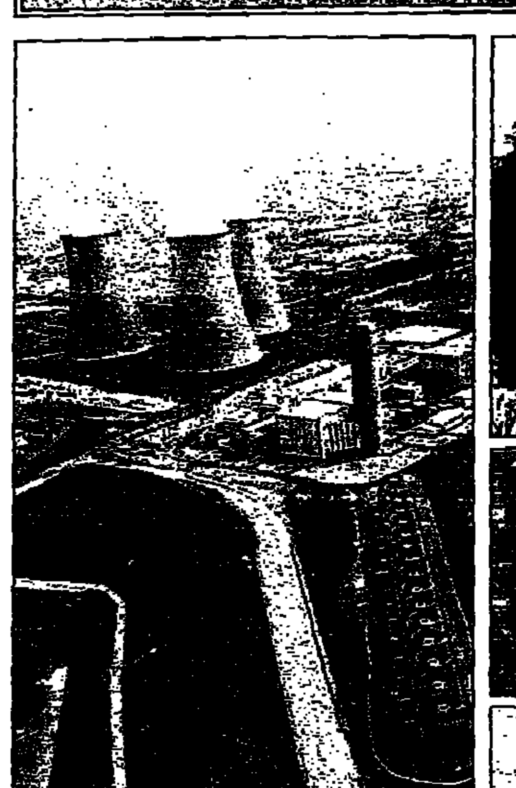
The sale, along with that forced upon PowerGen, was an attempt by the Department of Trade and Industry to stir up competition in electricity generation — part of the power industry that has faced a tide of complaints for high charges and the ability of two, and later three, companies to set power prices. Since the inefficient fragmentation of the industry by the Conservatives to prepare it for sale, the generators have been dogged with controversy over market dominance, have been dealt two orders to sell power stations and have faced a short-lived price cap.

Once the Drax sale is complete, National Power should be able to put behind it much of the regulatory uncertainty that has hung over the company since privatisation. At least that is what Keith Henry, chief executive, believes. "Drax has to be the last thing we ever divest in this country," he said.

The company will be much smaller in the UK, but able to spend freely overseas, where it has directed much of its attention for several years. It has already invested £1.5 billion in power projects across the globe, from Houston to Bangkok and Sydney.

A clearer picture of the way forward for National Power will make life easier for Mr Henry, who was largely hired by John Baker, the previous chief executive and until last year National Power's chairman, for his international enthusiasm.

Mr Henry has been frustrated by the level of uncertainty and government involvement in generation, which is not even a regulated area. "It is very difficult managing such a downsizing and one that comes out of the blue," he said. "We had thought that the first plant divestment [of 4,000 megawatts three years ago] was a final arrangement and then came another one. It would have been much better if the industry had been privatised more in the shape of how it is now, rather than *ad hoc* restructuring."




Global demand offers bright prospects, despite more competition in the market. Didcot, the Oxfordshire plant, left, and middle, second column, outstrips Bangladesh's output. Under Keith Henry, right, National Power's interests include the Little Barford power plant, top, and Kirkby Moor wind farm, bottom

National Power responded to the latest demand to sell another 4,000 megawatts by saying that it wished to buy a regional electricity company's supply business. Separating out supply is still not strictly possible as laws have not been passed to divide the businesses. However, it is thought that the Department of Trade and Industry and the energy regulator will approve plans.

National Power has often been unfavourably compared with its former generating sibling PowerGen, and seen as lumbering behind its more dynamic and high-profile rival. This has largely been down to domestic strategy. PowerGen has always been mustard-keen to buy a regional electricity company and to become vertically integrated — controlling power from the power station to the household plug.

Three years ago PowerGen bid for Midlands Electricity, and National Power followed with a takeover attempt on Southern Electric. Both bids were blocked by Ian Lang, then Trade and Industry Secretary.

The Labour Government proved more receptive — allowing PowerGen's takeover last year of East Midlands.

National Power's purchase of Midlands' supply business — launched last November — was different. It had steered away from paying for the whole package of distribution and supply — the two operations that make up a regional business.

The generator's idea was to buy its way into a customer base without also taking on a heavily regulated and nil-growth business in distribution. Mr Henry wants to form further alliances with supply companies, although there are signs that he could face unease from the DTI over this. He will press on, and says: "I can't see any reason why we shouldn't do more."

National Power still has to sign further coal contracts and this could be a lever as it negotiates consent over its domestic strategy.

Mr Henry will hope to persuade Stephen Byers, the new Trade and Industry Secretary, of his arguments. For a chief executive who was surprised at the amount of government involvement in business, after arriving from Brown & Root, Mr Henry will now have to try to make the acquaintance of the third Trade and Industry Secretary in a year. He had been within hours of a first appointment with Margaret Beckett when she was replaced by Peter Mandelson.

If National Power gets the go-ahead to buy one or more extra supply divisions, they will be funded by the proceeds from Drax. The City expects the station to fetch more than £2 billion. But even several links will leave the generator with a good deal of cash left over. Shareholders may hope for a dividend boost. National Power made corporate history three years ago with the biggest special dividend at the time when it shelled out £1.1 billion to investors.

Although the generator will look to bolster its UK base, it is unlikely to try to launch National Power as an energy brand to take on competitors. Through its planned links, it is securing guaranteed custom for its power as the marketplace for electricity is about to be changed. It is intended that next year — although the date may slip — power trading will switch from the present pool system to bilateral contracts and demand-led buying. This will shake the operation of the generators, throwing them into a market that is likely to be far less secure for their product than the current one.

National Power's brand may well be better known overseas than at home. It is through the exporting of expertise that is well associated with the British deregulated market that the generator has been able to make much of its headway in international joint ventures and privatisation programmes.

The generator's approach to overseas ventures is like that of a flying doctor. It parachutes its own staff in small numbers into new ventures to instil into the local management and workers the culture and experience of National Power. In many areas, its approach is more incremental than the headline mega-merger deals favoured by some of its competitors. Its interests in the US, for example, are more than half the size of PacifiCorp — the company recently bought by ScottishPower.

Mr Henry believes that the potential of the international market is enormous, although it has its difficulties. National Power's involvement in Pakistan, particularly with the Hub power project, cost the business £25 million after the Government terminated contract payments. Elsewhere, many privatisation programmes are slowing down.

However, overall, the growth expected in the world power market is huge, triggered by the needs of developing countries. It has been estimated that over the next ten years up to 800 gigawatts of new power will be needed in the world — equivalent to 200 Drax stations.

CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

"The company is far more commercially orientated and is not resting on its laurels. It is not expecting things to work for it because it is a big player. There are signs that National Power has turned the corner and is going to become a lot more aggressive overseas."
Andy Stone, Banque Nationale de Paris

"Its difficulty arises from two mistakes it made in 1995: failure to anticipate the impact on the UK electricity market of the liberalisation of the gas market; and substantially underestimating the difficulties of building a power business overseas. As a result, it increased its dividend by 49 per cent in 1995, as it thought prospects were far rosier than it had any right to expect. It will be pushed to maintain the current level of dividend."
Tony White, Dresdner Kleinwort Benson

Ethical expression[1]	6/10
Fat-cat quotient[2]	6/10
Financial record	7/10
Share performance	6/10
Attitude to staff	9/10
Strength of brand	7/10
Innovation	7/10
Annual report	8/10
City star rating	7/10
Future prospects	7/10
Total	70/100

Ethical expression is evaluated by [1]Integrity Works. The fat-cat quotient, in which best boardroom pay practice scores highest, is provided by [2]Crisp Consulting.

Internet shopping 'set to boom'

By Sarah Cunningham

SHOPPING on the Internet is expected to enjoy spectacular growth and even last year it managed to attract one million UK customers — double the total a year earlier — including a growing number of middle-aged and elderly people.

The Internet currently accounts for just 0.2 per cent of retail sales, but a new report expects this to rise to 2.5 per cent in the next four years. Electronic commerce will then be worth more than £6 billion annually. US Internet retailers' success at Christmas led to a frenzy of speculation on Wall Street at the turn of the year.

The number of people aged 15 to 24 buying from Internet sites has dropped sharply. Verdict, the retail consultancy behind the report, blames the slowness of the Internet and a lack of innovation on many retailers' websites. By contrast, the number of people aged over 45 using the medium for shopping has increased dramatically, which Verdict cites as evidence that electronic shopping is moving into the mainstream and the mass market.

Retailers have been slow to respond to the growing demand. So far, only 14 of the 100 largest UK retailers have websites from which goods can be ordered. Another 33 have "non-transactional" websites that offer only information.

A small but growing number of customers have begun e-mailing companies asking them to begin selling online, the report says. The products that are most likely to become more popular purchases on the Internet are computer software and games, books and music and video. Clothing will also grow as an electronic market.

Interactive shopping on television is seen as potentially exciting, although the report says that "details of how this service will operate in practice are sketchy so it is difficult to comment definitively about how it will fit in".

One obstacle that Internet retailers will have to overcome is customers' concern about security. Verdict's consumer research shows that more than 50 per cent of Internet purchasers are concerned about giving their credit card details over the Internet.

SFI unveils millennium plans

By Dominic Walsh

SFI GROUP, the pub operator, is planning to offer all-in food and drinks packages in an effort to open its doors on the eve of the millennium without being held to ransom by staff. Bar workers are demanding up to £100 an hour and DJs are holding out for £2,500 to work next New Year's Eve, causing a number of pub chains, including JD Wetherspoon, to scrap plans for millennium festivities.

But SFI, which saw a 5 per cent rise in like-for-like sales in the four weeks to January 3, used last New Year's Eve to try out a scheme that reduced staff numbers by 20 per cent and employed the latest technology to beam in music and entertainment from Chrysalis without the need for an on-site DJ. This has avoided a potential "ransom situation".

Some 600 tickets were pre-sold at the Litten Tree in Bournemouth, the £25 price being inclusive of all drinks and a self-service buffet.

Andrew Latham, SFI's commercial director, said the evening had proved extremely successful — and profitable — and the concept would be tested again in the middle of the year and used across most of the group's 60 pubs, including its Bar Med chain, on New Year's Eve. "We learnt a lot of lessons about how to minimise the number of staff we need," Mr Latham said.

He said no decision had yet been taken on how much staff would be paid this year, but it might take the form of a "significant loyalty payment" from a special bonus pool. The ticket price has also yet to be decided.

One of the aspects the trial addressed was alcohol consumption in the context of a free bar. "There were no incidents or major problems at all," Mr Latham said. "In fact, there were probably fewer than on a normal night. One chap was asked to leave and three or four were told they'd had enough to drink, but it all went very smoothly and produced a real party atmosphere."

The Home Office has announced that pubs will be allowed to stay open all night and SFI is planning a night-long event culminating in a hot breakfast.

[illegible]

1998 High	Low	Mkt Cap (million)		Price pence	Wkly +/-	Yld %	P/E
3¼	0¾	2.40	10 Grp	1	...	...	..
191	74½	12.50	AFA Systems	99	- 9½		
133½	93½	12.30	AMCO Corp	95	..	9.2	7.1
157½	127½	8.29	ATA Group	127½	..	2.0	10.0
271	175	29.40	Access Plus	175	..	3.6	14.7
67½	45½	6.01	AdVal Group	45½	- 1	..	7.8
7¼	3¼	3.65	African Gold	3½	- ¼	...	
96½	36½	31.70	Albemarle & Bd	71½	+ ½	1.7	19.5
43½	24½	10.70	Allzyme	30			
102½	42½	8.69	Ambient Media	45½	- 1		
325	88½	6.77	Ambishus Pub Co	107½			...
102½	96½	35.00	Anglo Siam Oil	96½		...	...
119	72½	3.21	Anglo-Welsh	103½	+ 4½	3.6	8.5
117½	69	54.80	Antonov	70½	- 2		..
110½	85½	17.40	Aortech	85½	- 2	..	
100	80	4.42	Aram Resources	95		6.2	28.6
90	50	6.63	Archer Dedicated	65		..	
5½	3¼	2.95	Artisan (UK)	4¼	+ ¼		...
425	236½	80.00	Ask Central	352½	+ 2½	0.4	31.2
72½	54½	1.50	Athelney Trust	55½		2.5	47.4
24¼	7¼	13.70	Atlantic Caspian	7¼	- ½		...
68½	5½	4.56	Avalon Oil	6	...	..	..
193	124	54.90	BATM Adv Comms	176½		1.7	
238½	76½	14.80	BCO Technologies	82½	- 9		
317½	135	21.10	BGR	135	- 2	2.7	15.4
3½	1	0.92	Bakery Services	1½			
115½	44½	21.70	Barbican Health	112½		...	..
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

1998 High	Low	Mkt Cap (million)		Price pence	Wkly +/-	Yld %	P/E
6¼	2¾	7.03	Dentmaster	4¾	+ ¼	3.1	11.6
495	16½	9.46	Desire Petroleum	20	+ 2	...	54.9
79½	52	7.72	Digital Anima	52½	...	..	...
32½	17½	11.90	Dimension Res	19	- 1½	..	
18½	3½		Dimension Wts	14	- 2½		
27½	16½	2.74	Dobbie Heel	18½	- 1	10.8	6.9
135½	79½	7.09	Delyn Group	81½	...	3.8	13.6
45	16½	5.73	Dinatek	30½	- 2	...	...
406	195	14.80	Dobbies Garden	225	..	2.6	13.7
30	19½	2.36	Downtex	19½	..	..	10.1
263½	145	20.80	Dragons Health	173½	+ 7	2.1	18.0
3¼	2	1.71	Drings of Bath	2			12.9
405	217½	12.20	Durlacher	406	+ 7½		16.0
39½	34½	3.67	Eagle	37½	...	...	..
210½	73½	41.70	Easynet	203½	+ 14	..	
330	120	35.00	Elec Retail Sys	165	+ 2½		
103	72	21.80	Enterprises	80	+ 4	7.1	5.8
21½	11½	4.31	Epic Group	18½	+ ½	...	20.0
45	45	14.10	Epicore Networks	45	..	...	
95	27½	1.02	Eurasia Mining	27½	...	...	
3¼	2½	4.92	Fairplace Cons	3¼	...	4.0	9.9
345	200	8.96	Farlake	344½	+ 19½	1.5	...
82½	47½	12.50	Fayrewood	59½	- 3	2.6	10.4
103½	20½	4.33	Fieldens	86½	..	...	..
117½	58	15.10	Firestone Dmds	58	- 3½	...	
413½	206½	121.60	Fitness First	348½	+ 26	..	57.9
160	95	4.03	Floreneres	156		2.4	25.6
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

1998 High	Low	Mkt Cap (million)		Price pence	Wkly +/-	Yld %	P/E
46½	17½	4.43	Jumbo Intl	22½	...	...	....
3	1	6.79	Just Group	1½	+ ¼	...	....
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

1998 High	Low	Mkt Cap (million)		Price pence	Wkly +/-	Yld %	P/E
1½	0½	1.09	Pordum Foods	0½	...	...	...
1	0¾	0.16	Pordum Fds Wts	0¾	...	...	...
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

هكذا من الأصل

Mass delusion of US stock market

There's no stopping the equity market bandwagon. Last week the US stock market posted all-time highs. Yes, I know that there was a new year and the birth of a new currency to celebrate. But this was surely exuberance beyond the call of duty. The performance of the US stock market continues to amaze — and to demand explanation.

According to one view, the explanation is simple. This is a classic inflationary boom caused by rapid growth of the money supply. The spillover into generalised inflation has been held back by the effects of the Asian crisis, the earlier strength of the dollar and the weakness of commodity prices. But just you wait. Some time soon, the wider effects will come through and inflation will take off.

On this view, far from deserving the man of the year award, the Fed Chairman, Alan Greenspan, has made an appalling mistake in cutting US interest rates. Low rates have encouraged bank borrowing and this has inflated the money supply. Flush with cash, investors have sought other assets — hence the great rush into equities. This is a repeat of the story played out in Britain in the late Eighties, only this time the asset bubble is primarily in stocks rather than residential property. Eventually, what Greenspan has caused through setting interest rates too low he will have to correct by raising them — and that will prick the stock market bubble.

But there are other ways of explaining US monetary growth. The surge of the stock market has itself encouraged borrowing. Individuals have been made to feel richer and this has prompted them to spend above their current earnings, financed by borrowing. So monetary growth and rising stock prices may go together, but it may be the strength of the stock market that lies behind the monetary growth and not the other way round.

For companies, the relationship has been symbiotic. Major support for the stock market has come from US companies buying back their own shares, financed either by increased borrowing, or by cash that might otherwise have been used to reduce borrowing. As the market has risen, this strategy has been vindicated, thereby encouraging more of the same.

Simultaneously, monetary growth has been boosted by a big structural shift. The US current account deficit with the rest of the world has continued to grow. This by itself has required increased finance, but, meanwhile, the Federal Government has moved into surplus. (So much for the idea that current account deficits and fiscal deficits are two sides of the same coin.) This internal shift is profoundly important for the growth of the US money supply because



ROGER BOOTLE

the Government does not borrow from the banks, but the two sectors whose financial balance is deteriorating, namely persons and corporations, do.

So if monetary growth is not the fundamental explanation for the exuberance of the equity market, what is? My answer will not appeal to those who believe in the unfailing rationality of financial markets. I think the valuation of the US equity market has about it the quality of a mass delusion, which feeds on itself, rather like a chain letter. Such phenomena are, after all, far from unknown in the world of investment. The South Sea Bubble and the Dutch Tulip Mania readily spring to mind.

At the root of the present delusion is the unpreparedness of investors to accept pedestrian returns on their portfolios after the heady rewards of the past. Cash or bonds paying only 5 per cent or so can readily be dismissed as boring. The prevailing view is that there must be something that is going to yield 20 per cent-plus. Equities have returned that in the past, so why not stick with a winner?

The sophisticated version of this is the view derived from statistical studies that equities "always" outperform in the end. But if the economy is to grow by 4 per cent real in the good times and perhaps 2.5 per cent on average, while the prices that businesses can charge for their products are rising by 1 to 2 per cent, why should there be an asset class that is going to return you 20 per cent-plus?

The fact that investors have recently enjoyed spectacular returns from equities should make you more cautious, not less.

Moreover, the bull market seems to be propelled by two completely opposite sorts of stock. On the one side, there are the high-tech stocks, which power ahead even though they have next to no earnings. Amazon.com, the online book and music retailer, last week announced that revenues had quadrupled in the fourth quarter but also warned analysts not to expect a lower quarterly loss as a result. The effect? The shares immediately rose 5 per cent.

On the other side, there are the old sectors, where stocks rise on the prospects for "consolidation". Even the weaker performers zoom ahead on the view that they will be taken over. There was a time when over-capacity was sorted out at great cost to the shareholders by companies going bust. Now, the shareholders seem to enjoy a bonanza.

Worry about an upsurge of inflation in the US, if you like. Personally, I am more concerned by the idea that the US is playing out a different version of what happened in Japan. Asset values have detached themselves from the income streams that they generate. When reality dawns, the result will be a crash towards deflation. Far from rising sharply, US interest rates and bond yields would then be driven to super-low levels. We are indeed supremely fortunate that we have Alan Greenspan, and not some mad monetarist, to chart a course through these treacherous waters.

Efforts to tackle bug could end in bust

By Carl Mortished

FEARS are growing that efforts by large companies to protect their businesses from the millennium bug could lead to a rapid boom followed by a bust at the turn of the century.

Evidence is emerging of stockpiling in both raw materials and products as firms attempt to ringfence their operations from anticipated distribution and supply-chain failures caused by computer failures.

The possibility of computer meltdown, known as the Year 2000 (Y2K) problem, is caused by the inability of older generation computer programmes and hardware to recognise dates in four digits. Billions of pounds are being spent to correct the problem but concern about panic buying is encouraging firms to stockpile.

Drug companies are planning sharp increases in inventory to guarantee supplies of essential drugs, while just-in-time manufacturers in areas such as food and in the car industry are seeking guarantees from suppliers.

The prospect of a sudden build-up in stocks is worrying investment analysts who believe that some companies have failed to alert investors to a potential problem.

Bill O'Neill, economist at HSBC, the investment bank, reckons that defensive behaviour in anticipation of a "millennium bomb" will give a quick boost to the economy while at the same time depressing corporate profits in 1999. He said: "It will depress profits to the extent that firms need working capital to build up inventory."

Evidence from Cap Gemini, the information technology group, suggests that firms are planning to stockpile and the trend is likely to worsen. According to its survey of 1,700 businesses in two countries, about a third overall were planning to increase inventories and as much as 38 per cent of US firms. Chris Webster of Cap Gemini said that the survey, undertaken last year, was about intentions. He expects the number to increase. "People have less confidence in their suppliers than in their own systems and many are building boxes around their organisations." The trend is evident among drug companies, such as SmithKline Beecham, Zeneca and Novartis. Virginia Pascoe, analyst at HSBC, said that she will be adjusting her forecasts for the sector to take account of the cost of increased inventories. "They are planning to build up stocks themselves because they do not want wholesalers to increase stocks."

The drug industry is highly sensitive, particularly in the large US healthcare market, to price pressure from buyers. A build-up in stock by wholesalers could hand buyers a weapon that could boomerang back on manufacturers. Mr Webster sees a wider threat to the whole of industry if the trend picks up. "A mini-crash is a real risk."

FT plans edition in German

By Raymond Snoddy
Media Editor

THE *Financial Times* is considering the launch of a German language edition as part of its expansion plans in Europe.

Andrew Gowers, Deputy Editor of the business daily and acting Editor for more than 12 months during a period spent by the Editor, Richard Lambert, in the US, will move to Germany almost immmediately to explore the feasibility of the project.

The *FT* is likely to announce today that Peter Martin, international edition editor, will become deputy editor. Pearson, the media and information group that owns the *FT*, announced nearly two years ago that it was to spend up to £100 million developing the paper over five years, mainly in the US. Mr Lambert went to the US to spearhead a successful effort to expand in the American market, and increased sales there have helped to drive the *FT*'s circulation to record peaks of more than 380,000.

It is expected that Mr Gowers, a former Reuters Zurich correspondent who is fluent in German, will perform the same role in Germany, with the title of Editorial Director. Mr Gowers said: "We don't have a venture yet but it looks promising."

JOHNNY EGGITT/AFP



Retailers say January sales have not compensated for weak pre-Christmas figures. Consumers appear to have money but lack confidence to spend it

Christmas sales confirm retailers' fears

By Janet Bush
Economics Editor

THE Christmas shopping season appears to have lived up to retailers' worst fears, with figures tomorrow expected to show that retail sales failed to grow in December compared with a year ago.

The British Retail Consortium is also expected to announce a drop in sales in the October to December period compared with the previous three months, confirming that consumer spending has slowed markedly.

The BRC has not reported a zero year-on-year figure since it started compiling its Monthly Sales Monitor in January 1994, and a flat figure is likely to prompt calls from the retailers' representative for more interest rate cuts to head off an even more severe slowdown on the high street.

A gloomy set of BRC figures will dash hopes raised last week by positive trading statements from Next and Clinton Cards and by a slightly less gloomy survey of distributive trades from the Confederation of British Industry.

In December 1997 a slow run-up to Christmas was compensated for by healthy January sales: a season of two halves. However, retailers are reporting that this year the sales have not been strong enough to compensate for weak pre-Christmas weeks.

Retailers said that they were baffled by the poor showing from consumers, saying that they appear to have money but not the confidence to spend it. There has been a great deal of anecdotal evidence that consumers are prepared to buy, but only at highly competitive prices.

However, T J Hughes, a discount department store operating largely in the North West and the Midlands, yesterday reported a 44 per cent rise in total sales during the Christmas period, with like-for-like sales (stripping out changes in retailing floor space) up 12 per cent.

John Lewis said on Friday that its sales had risen by 21 per cent in the Christmas week, but the figures were boosted by the opening of a new store in Bristol. Analysts estimated that like-for-like sales were down about 2 per cent.

Christmas trading statements are imminent from large retailers such as Kingfisher, Boots, Great Universal Stores, Selfridges and Dixons.

Nasdaq scandal brokers to be fined by SEC

From Oliver August
in New York

THE Securities & Exchange Commission will today fine some of the biggest Wall Street brokers millions of dollars over a price-fixing scandal on the Nasdaq market.

The fines come as part of a settlement agreed by Merrill Lynch, Morgan Stanley, Salomon Smith Barney and others that will conclude one of the darkest chapters in Wall Street's recent history. The brokers allegedly conspired to manipulate Nasdaq, the world's biggest electronic stock market, to widen the spread between bid and offer prices, which represents their profit margin.

The SEC negotiated the settlement with 24 brokerages after a two-year investigation, one of the biggest in US financial history. The case is based on extensive recordings of conversations between traders at different banks. Some 50 individual traders will also be fined and are likely to be banned from the financial sector for life.

The trading scandal at America's second-biggest exchange had threatened to undermine Nasdaq's marketing drive and expansion plan in Europe. In a UK television advertising campaign, Nasdaq presents itself as the new, dynamic face of Wall Street. Deutsche Borse, the German exchange, and Nasdaq are planning a strategic alliance.

The Nasdaq market lists many small and fast-growing companies. Their often volatile shares are not as widely traded as blue-chip stocks on the New York Stock Exchange.

The charges against some of the 5,000-plus Nasdaq traders first surfaced in 1994 when an academic study claimed that patterns of trading suggested "tacit collusion" between market participants.

The academic study triggered an investigation of trading practices and in 1996 Nasdaq increased supervision as part of a Justice Department settlement. But late last year investors who had been hurt by the trading practices sued several banks and were paid about $1 billion (£600 million) in an out-of-court settlement.

Traders face a $7,500 penalty for every time they illegally consulted a rival trader about a share price or spread. If a customer was hurt by these actions, the trader will be fined an additional $15,000 for each violation.

Tay rebel seeks quick turnaround

By Robert Lea

THE dissident Tay Homes shareholder trying to oust its board and make himself chief executive has no intention of staying involved in running the northern housebuilder.

Richard Tice, joint chief executive of the privately owned Sunley Group, a 10 per cent shareholder in Tay, has forced a special meeting of Tay investors, likely to be next month, at which he is seeking the removal of the four main directors.

Mr Tice, who is critical of Tay's share price performance, claims to have the support of Tay's largest investor, PDFM, the fund manager, which holds 17 per cent of it.

Mr Tice admitted that the management team he has assembled to displace Tay's board will be a stop-gap. "We plan to act as facilitators in the turnaround of this business," he said. "We intend to cut the cost base and cut back debt and then merge the business to create a larger entity."

Mr Tice, 34, grandson of Sunley's founder, said merger plans did not include linking Tay to Sunley, its rival builder.

Taiwan deal for Alstom

ALSTOM, the Anglo-French engineering company, will today sign a €650 million (£450 million) contract for construction of a coal-fired power plant in Taiwan (Janet Bush writes).

The contract with Ho-Ping Power Corporation is one of the first private initiatives in independent power production in Taiwan, according to Alstom. Building work will begin this month, with commercial operation expected to begin in 2002.

Alstom will be responsible for the design, supply, construction and commissioning of the plant, including the civil engineering.

Cantor locked in dispute with BT

By Jason Nissé

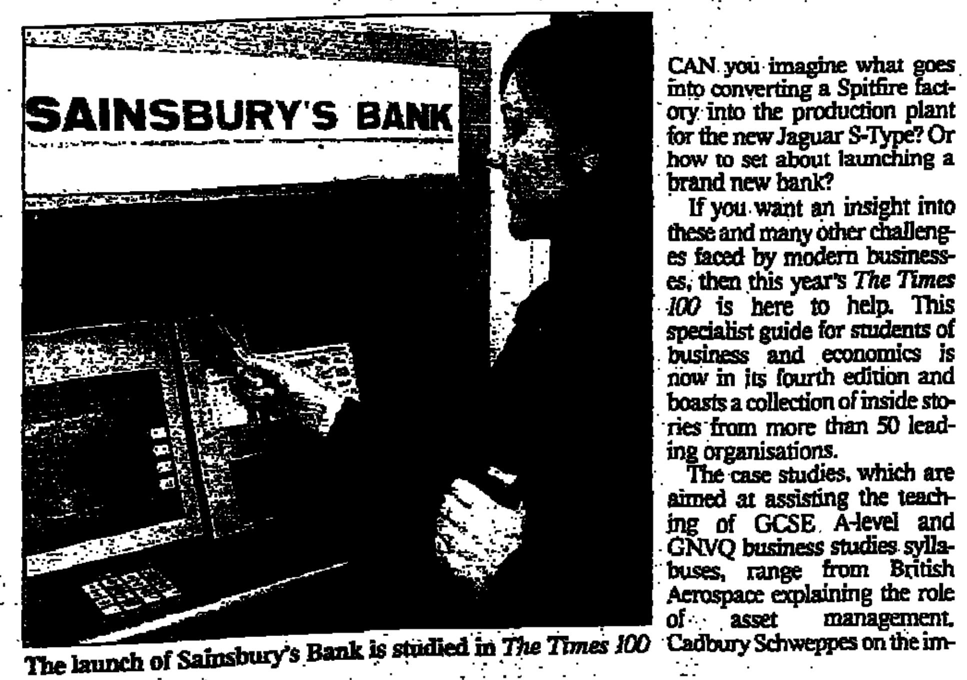
CANTOR FITZGERALD, one of the world's leading money-brokers, is in a bitter dispute with British Telecom about a worldwide trading system that Cantor says does not work.

The International Trading Platform ordered from BT's Synegra Systems division two years ago at a cost of £2.4 million plus VAT was supposed to link Cantor's giant dealing room in the City with its headquarters in New York and its offices in Frankfurt, Milan and Luxembourg.

The system involved communications links between dealing screen along with computer hardware and software. Cantor, a specialist in money market transactions, runs trading operations 24 hours a day around the world, passing the "trading book" across time zones from the US to Europe and then to the Far East and back to the US.

The deal was seen as a coup for the Synegra Systems operation. However, Cantor claims that problems began to emerge as the system was being installed.

Case studies aid business students



The launch of Sainsbury's Bank is studied in *The Times 100*

By Sarah Cunningham

CAN you imagine what goes into converting a Spitfire factory into the production plant for the new Jaguar S-Type? Or how to set about launching a brand new bank?

If you want an insight into these and many other challenges faced by modern businesses, then this year's *The Times 100* is here to help. This specialist guide for students of business and economics is now in its fourth edition and boasts a collection of inside stories from more than 50 leading organisations.

The case studies, which are aimed at assisting the teaching of GCSE, A-level and GNVQ business studies syllabuses, range from British Aerospace explaining the role of asset management, Cadbury Schweppes on the importance of cause-related marketing and Boots on the relaunch of its 17 range of cosmetics to appeal to "girls with attitude".

The publication is sent free of charge, courtesy of the contributors and Times Newspapers, to all UK secondary schools and colleges of higher and further education — about 5,700 institutions, with, between them, about 750,000 14- to 18-year-old students of business studies or economics.

The case studies underline the message that business is anything but boring. Jaguar, which is part of the Ford group, explains how it developed its new S-Type and prepared Castle Bromwich, a factory built in 1938 by the Ministry of Aviation, so that the entire car could be assembled at the single site.

Sainsbury, the supermarkets group, explains how it took advantage of changes in high street banking to launch its own fully fledged bank, the first of its kind in the United Kingdom.

Golden Wonder goes into the thinking that lay behind its own launch of a low-fat crisp. The idea came from observing the rise of the lunch-box culture, with so many people being too busy to have a proper midday meal, and the consumer's desire for healthier foods.

The idea behind *The Times 100* is to give students up-to-date information that can be used alongside their textbooks so that they can understand an ever-changing business world.

CHARLES PLATIAU/AFP



Keizo Obuchi, left, last week issued a joint statement with President Chirac seeking to establish "a framework for mutual co-operation given the launch of the euro"

Dark side of the moon shadows dawn of euro

In its infancy, the new currency could find itself appreciating and creating demand problems for European exporters, writes Janet Bush

For all the birthday champagne and portentous rhetoric, the euro's first week was completely upstaged by dramatic movements in the dollar and the yen, its quarrelsome older siblings.

The US currency hit a 27-month low against the Japanese currency on Thursday, a slump of 35 per cent in the past five months, and there is every reason to expect more foreign exchange fireworks in the months to come. As these two mighty tectonic plates threaten to grind against each other, it is no wonder that France used the euro's launch to relaunch its pet obsession of currency target zones.

Keizo Obuchi, Japan's Prime Minister, who was last week on a tour of Europe, and Jacques Chirac, the French President, issued a joint statement on Thursday in which they agreed to seek to establish "a renewed framework for mutual co-operation on exchange markets, including strengthened mutual dialogue on macroeconomic policies, given the launch of the euro". In Tokyo, Toyoo Gyohten, a special advisor to the Japanese Prime Minister, said that setting a broad target zone would be a good start. Target zones are likely to figure again at Friday's meeting of ASEM, the Asia-Europe forum, in Frankfurt with Oskar Lafontaine, Germany's Finance Minister and a keen proponent of the idea, present.

Target zones are vehemently opposed by central bankers, including the European Central Bank and are not a realistic prospect in anything but the long term. The fact that they are being discussed is, however, highly suggestive both of a common European and Japanese desire to break US hegemony over world economic management and of real fear within euroland of damaging volatility among the big three currencies.

On the latter, euroland has genuine reason to be worried. Economic problems in both America and Japan are mounting and, if international investors lose faith in two out of the big three currencies, there is a real threat of massive inflows into the euro with all that this implies for growth and the battle to bring down mass unemployment on the Continent.

It would be a grave mistake to view the yen's appreciation, particularly its rapid rise last week, as a signal of imminent recovery in the Japanese economy. Yen were in demand mostly because banks and hedge funds were unwinding huge loss-making investment plays in which they had borrowed cheap yen to invest in higher-yielding dollar assets. Now they are buying back yen and selling dollars.

In fact, the rising yen has all the potential for making Japan's already parlous economic situation worse. The currency's strength has already damaged Japan's trade performance. Ministry of Finance figures show that, in November, Japan's trade surplus had fallen by 15 per cent from a year earlier, with exports being ominously outstripped by imports. (Unfortunately for Japan's invariably strained relations with America on trade, its surplus with the US continued to widen). Toyota calculates that a rise of Y1 against the dollar on average cuts its annual revenue by Y10 billion, or $90 million.

At the same time, long-term interest rates have been rising because Japanese institutions simply cannot afford (or have no appetite for) a gargantuan programme of Japanese government bonds which need to be issued to finance Japan's expansionary fiscal policies. The yield on the benchmark 10-year JGB has risen to above 2 per cent for the first time since September, 1997.

Far from growth returning to Japan this year, authoritative economists are talking about a further contraction in Japanese activity of something between 3 and 5 per cent. It is inconceivable that the yen can go on appreciating in these circumstances — unless the American economy finally cracks.

Leading Japanese officials preferred last week to focus on America's problems. Having been lectured for years by the US Treasury and its acolytes in the International Monetary Fund about Japan's excesses in the 1980s, the glee with which Eisuke Sakakibara, Vice-Finance Minister, expressed concerns about America's "bubble-like economy" was entirely understandable.

It also echoes a growing consensus that America's position as the world's spender of last resort, invaluable as demand collapsed in Asia last year, is no longer sustainable.

Nobody knows when the crack will come — even now the American public is blithely continuing to spend far more than it earns on the assumption that Wall Street will go on rising for ever — but most believe that, when the party is over, the hangover is going to be punishing. America's current account deficit is heading towards a record $300 billion this year. As a proportion of GDP, this would be about 3.5 per cent, as high as it was in 1987 when the dollar went into free-fall.

It is therefore easy to make a case for both the yen and the dollar falling on economic grounds. The most obvious destination for this money is the euro, which is already likely to be under upward pressure as portfolios are adjusted to raise the proportion invested in the new super-currency.

For those European politicans who triumphantly proclaimed their belief that the euro would threaten the dollar's dominance as the world's reserve currency last week — even before the first euro trade was settled — this may seem to be astonishingly good news. By virtue of chronic economic problems in the lands of the dollar and the yen, the euro could, even in its infancy, be a powerful magnet to international investment funds. It would, however, be a huge mistake to allow longer-term ambitions for the euro and for Europe's influence in the world monetary system to obscure the brutally uncomfortable position that euroland may soon find itself in. It could find, in its infancy, that both Japan (and Asia) and America (and Latin America) are in recession, or near to it. There will, therefore, be a demand problem for Europe's exporters. That problem could be exacerbated by a really strong and appreciating currency.

Tensions, already evident, between euroland's centre-left governments and the European Central Bank, could quickly deteriorate further as growth stalls and unemployment rises. Relations between member states may become heated far sooner than they would have done with a relatively benign world backdrop. There will be no safety valve in a depreciating currency or in a substantial fiscal stimulus because the Growth and Stability Pact forbids it. Popular political acceptance of the euro, already no more than lukewarm, could quickly chill.

None of this is to say that the euro is already a failure. It is, however, to introduce a dose of realism into last week's geo-political manoeuvrings. Nobody is bothering to look at the dark side of the shiny new moon. Europe's leaders have seized — with indecent haste, some might say — on the euro's launch as the start of Europe's accession to a very exclusive global top table. Japan's leaders have spent their visit to Europe trying to preserve the yen's status as one of the big three rather than trying to talk the currency down and so protect its exporters. America has, since the euro was born, been busy with the shenanigans taking shape in the Senate and has contributed little.

Against this background, Britain's best strategy would be to avoid the euro at all costs and to allow sterling to float freely in a no man's land between the big three. Currency obscurity — not greatness — may be the best recipe for stability.

0.8 $/euro 0.9 1.0 1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4 1.5 Inverted scale
YEN right-hand scale
EURO* left-hand scale
150 Yen/$ 140 130 120 110 100 90 80
1995 96 97 98 99
JAPAN EURO-11 UNITED STATES FORECAST
200 150 100 50 0$bn -50 -100 -150 -200 -250 -300
87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98† 99
Source: Datastream/ICV; OECD; IMF
*Average of euro-11 currencies before 1999 † Estimate

Answers from page 40

HUTUNG

(c) In northern Chinese cities: a narrow side-street, an alley.
"In places the hutungs are only just wide enough for a man to pass."

MAESTRIA

(b) Skill, mastery. The Italian word.
"While admiring the maestria of this piece of writing by Mr Shaw I find in it several inaccuracies."

MORAN

(a) The warrior group of the Masai tribe which comprises the younger unmarried males. Also a member of this group. The Masai word.
"The moran are the warrior age-grade. In the past the moran constituted a free military organisation within the tribe."

NUNC STANS

(a) The eternal timeles 'now' presumed, as an attribute of God, to be co-existent with Time. From the Latin nunc now + stans present participle of stare to stand.
"In willing the world is at once an eternal process and an eternal stationary thing - a nunc stans - at the same time."

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1. Nf5! wins, eg, 1. . . . gxf5; 2 Qh4 and mate follows.

TELEVISION CHOICE

A moving family comedy

Dad
BBC1, 8.30pm

Andrew Marshall's sitcom about fathers and sons is back for a second series and should continue to find an appreciative audience among those who like their comedy benign rather than abrasive. If *Dad* lacks the surreal touches that enliven Marshall's *2point4 Children*, its portrayal of family relationships is no less accurate. Tonight's episode is built around a familiar proposition, that moving house is a trauma only a notch short of bereavement. But, thanks to Marshall's script and assured playing, it stays the course. The prospect of the move has put Kevin McNally's chronically stressed Alan even more on edge than usual and the joke is that while trying to help, his wife, son and, most of all, his father only make matters worse. George Cole's Brian is a delightful study in timing and understatement.

Mayday: Lost at Sea
Channel 4, 9.00pm

The second in this series about accidents at sea focuses on the sinking of the ferry boat Estonia on a rough night in the Baltic in 1994. The death toll of 850 made it Europe's worst passenger ship disaster, but still nobody knows for certain what caused it. The film reconstructs the episode with the help of survivors, notably Paul Barney, an English landscape gardener, who, after the ship went down, spent the night adrift on a liferaft with 13 other passengers. By dawn only six were alive. The official inquiry blamed a design fault in the bow door. It suggested that the locks and hinges were not sufficient to stop heavy waves tearing it off, allowing water to surge into the car deck and turn the boat over. A team of German experts rejected this, claiming that the ship was so poorly maintained that it was not fit to sail.

The League of Gentlemen
BBC2, 9.30pm

After the gentle comedy of *Dad*, here is something completely different. Among the milder of several jokes is a hearse where the flowers on the coffin spell BASTARD. Among the regular characters are a transsexual taxi driver and a vet who puts the wrong animal to sleep. There are gags about scatology, gynaecology and private parts. The writer-performers are four young men who met at Leeds University and won the Perrier Award at Edinburgh in 1997. Three of the team play all the characters, of which there are more than 60 in the series, both male and female. This latest venture is a sort of gruesome soap opera, set in a dead-end northern town and delivered as a series of sketches. Some will find it hilarious, others will be disgusted. It is difficult to see any reaction in between.

Mark Gatiss and Reece Shearsmith star in *The League of Gentlemen* (BBC2, 9.30pm)

Trial by Jury
BBC2, 11.15pm

Here is another of those fictional court cases given verisimilitude by using a real judge and barristers and having the verdict delivered by a jury recruited, as juries are, from the ordinary public. Admittedly the accused and the witnesses are played by actors but not, on the whole, so that you would notice. Screened over three consecutive nights, the trial is of Mark Fay, charged with murdering his wife. The prosecution paints the background of a disintegrating marriage and alleges that Fay carried out the murder to head off a costly divorce settlement. Fay says his wife was killed by a prowler who had broken into the house and knocked him unconscious. Armchair jurors fascinated by conflicting evidence, or those who find in courtrooms one of the most satisfying forms of drama, should be equally gripped. **Peter Waymark**

RADIO CHOICE

The Big Boys Breakfast
Talk Radio, 6.00am

Conscious as I am that not many readers get up before dawn in order to scour *The Times* for my early-morning listening recommendations, the start of a new programme in radio's principal battleground nonetheless warrants proper attention. This is the time of day when audiences are built, a point proved beyond any doubt by Chris Tarrant at Capital and Chris Evans at Virgin. But the main target for Talk's new presenting duo, Nick Ferrari and David Banks (the big boys in question) is more likely to be Radio 5 Live. The three-hour show will include a five-minute editorial by Andrew Neil and three slots a day for Mystic Meg. Banks and Ferrari are tabloid titans from way back, so shyness and introspection need not be expected.

Stephen Lawrence: The Truth
Radio 5 Live, 8.00pm

The second part of the title may be optimistic given the elusive nature of the truth in the shameful case of the murder of Stephen Lawrence, but this two-hour reconstruction of the inquiry, based on transcripts (the official report has yet to be published), performs a valuable service, albeit one which should not have been necessary, because an inquiry of this importance should have been covered by radio and television in the first place. But in Britain, disclosure remains an ambition rather than a reality. The reconstruction, presented by Trevor Phillips, graphically recalls the appalling errors, of commission and omission, made by the police. The programme consists of 25-minute segments, mixing reconstruction and analysis. **Peter Barnard**

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.30am Zoe Ball **9.00** Simon Mayo **12.00pm** Kevin Greening **2.00** Mark Radcliffe **4.00** Chris Moyles **6.00** Dave Pearce **8.00** Lamacq Live. Featuring Catatonia recorded live in Cardiff **12.00am** The Breezeblock **2.00** Clive Warren **4.00** Scott Mills

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Sarah Kennedy **7.30** Wake Up to Wogan **9.30** Ken Bruce **12.00pm** Jimmy Young **2.00** Ed Stewart **5.05** Johnnie Walker **7.00** Humphrey Lyttelton **8.00** Big Band Legends Live. Michael Parkinson presents a new series featuring big bandleaders in concert (1/6) **8.30** Georgie Fame (2/4) **9.30** In Days Before Rock 'n' Roll (3/4) **10.30** Richard Allinson **12.00am** Katrina Leskanich **3.00** Alex Lester

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports **6.00** Breakfast with Nick Robinson and Victoria Derbyshire **9.00** Nicky Campbell **12.00pm** The Midday News **1.00** Ruscoe and Co **4.00** Drive with Peter Allen and Jane Garvey **7.00** News Extra. Including the day's main sports round-up **7.30** Football Legends. Jimmy Armfield talks to Ray Wilson, former member of England's World Cup-winning squad in 1966 **8.00** Stephen Lawrence: The Truth. See Choice **10.00** Late Night Live **1.00am** Up All Night

VIRGIN

6.30am Chris Evans **9.30** Russ Williams **1.00pm** Nick Abbot **4.00** Harriet Scott **6.45** Mark Forrest **10.00** Richard Allen **1.00am** James Merritt **4.30** Jeremy Clark

TALK RADIO

6.00am The Big Boys Breakfast. See Choice **9.00** Scott Chisholm **1.00pm** Anna Raeburn **3.00** Peter Deeley's Drive-time **5.00** Sports Zone **8.00** James Whale **1.00am** Ian Collins

BBC WORLD SERVICE

5.00am The World Today **7.00** News **7.15** Newstalk **7.55** My Century **8.00** World News **8.05** Record News **8.20** Off the Shelf: Silas Marner **8.35** Health Matters **9.00** World News **9.05** Westway Access **9.20** The Vintage Chart Show **9.50** Sports Round-Up **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** Britain Today **10.45** The Farming World **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** Pick of the World **12.00pm** News **12.05** Outlook **12.45** Sports Round-Up **1.00** Newshour **2.00** World News **2.05** Health Matters **2.30** Meridian Feature **3.00** World News **3.05** Sports Roundup **3.15** Record News **3.30** Composer of the Month **4.00** World News **4.15** Insight **4.30** Multitrack: Hit-List **5.00** Europe Today **5.30** World Business Report **5.45** Sports Roundup **6.00** World News **6.15** Britain Today **6.30** The Next Big Thing **7.00** World News **7.05** Health Matters **7.30** Small Worlds **7.45** Off the Shelf: Silas Marner **8.00** Newshour **9.00** World News **9.05** World Business Report **9.20** Britain Today **9.30** Meridian Feature **10.00** World News **10.15** Sports Round-up **10.30** Multitrack: Hit-List **11.00** World News **11.05** Outlook **11.45** Insight **12.00am** The World Today **12.30** Health Matters **12.55** My Century **1.00** The World Today **1.30** Westway **1.45** Record News **2.00** The World Today **2.30** The Next Big Thing **3.00** The World Today **3.20** Sports Round-Up **3.30** World Business Report **3.45** Insight **4.00** The World Today

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Nick Bailey's Easier Breakfast. Favourite musical works, plus regular information updates **8.00** Henry Kelly. The Hall of Fame Hour and Record of the Week **12.00pm** Lunchtime Requests. Jane Jones presents listeners' favourites **2.00** Concerto. J.C. Bach (Concert Symphony in E flat major) **3.00** Jamie Crick. Continuous Classics and Afternoon Romance **6.30** Newsnight. John Brunning presents the latest stories **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven. Two hours of soothing sounds **9.00** Evening Concert. Beethoven (Piano Sonata; Concerto in C major for violin, cello and piano); Haydn (Missa Brevis); Mozart (String Quartet in D minor) **11.00** Mann at Night. Wind down with the sound of ambient music **2.00am** Concerto. J.C. Bach (Concert Symphony in E flat major) (r) **3.00** Mark Griffiths. The Early Breakfast Show

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air with Petroc Trelawny. Includes Debussy (Cantata: La Damoiselle Elue); Schubert (Impromptu in G flat, D899 No 3)
9.00 Masterworks with Peter Hobday. Includes Beethoven (Rondo a Capriccio in G, Op 129, Rage over a Lost Penny); Verdi (Macbeth, Witches' Chorus and Ballet)
10.30 Artist of the Week: Emanuel Ax
11.00 Sound Stories: Feuds Corner Richard Baker remembers Handel's contentious arrival on the English musical scene
12.00pm Composer of the Week: Rimsky-Korsakov
1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert Live from the Wigmore Hall, London: John Lill, piano. Beethoven (Piano Sonata in C, Op 53, Waldstein); Prokofiev (Piano Sonata No 7)
2.00 The BBC Orchestras BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Martyn Brabbins and Jerzy Maksymiuk, Artur Pizarro, piano
4.00 Opera in Action Robert Lloyd shares some of his experiences from 30 years in opera
4.45 Music Machine Tommy Pearson investigates the concept of the national anthem
5.00 In Tune This week, Sean Rafferty talks to the heads and founders of some of the smaller, more adventurous record companies
7.30 Performance on 3 A concert given on Saturday in the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester. BBC Philharmonic under Vassily Sinaisky, Pekka Kuusisto, violin. Schnittke (In Memoriam); Prokofiev (Violin Concerto No 2); Rachmaninov (Symphony No 3 in A minor)
9.20 Postscript: The Red Flag and the Red Mask Paul Neuberg explores the Communist project to use art to remould people's minds (1/5)
9.45 Ervin Schulhoff *The Charleston* and other jazz etudes, played by Emma Schmidt, piano
10.00 Voices A nocturnal collection of songs for long winter nights. Presented by Iain Burnside
10.45 Mixing It A session featuring the multi-instrumentalist Paul Schutze
11.30 Jazz Notes Alyn Shipton talks to Cleo Laine about singers who have influenced her career
12.00am Composer of the Week: Francis Poulenc (r)
1.00 Through the Night with Donald Macleod. **1.00** Grieg (Lyric Pieces, Op 43); Brahms (Piano Sonata No 3 in F minor, Op 5); Chopin (Piano Sonata No 3 in B minor, Op 58) **3.00-5.00** Schools **3.00** Music Box **3.15** Something to Think About **3.30** The Song Tree **3.45** Stories and Rhymes **4.00 Primary Geography** **5.05** Brahms (String Quartet No 2 in A minor, Op 51 No 2)

RADIO 4

5.30am World News **5.35 Shipping Forecast**
5.40 Inshore Forecast **5.45 Prayer for the Day**
5.47 Farming Today Presented by Anna Hill
6.00 Today Introduced by James Naughtie and Winifred Robinson
9.00 Start the Week with Jeremy Paxman
9.45 (FM) Serial: The Doctor, the Detective and Arthur Conan Doyle Michael Williams reads the first extract from Martin Booth's biography, charting Conan Doyle's early years as a GP (r)
9.45 (LW) Daily Service From Clifton Cathedral
10.00 Woman's Hour with Martha Kearney and guests
11.00 Rosa Rust Colin Holmes hears Rosa Rust's story of survival in war-torn Kazakhstan (r)
11.30 Bangers and Mash New comedy series by Katie Hims. A nun deserts the convent for a career in catering. With Mark Straker (1/6)
12.00pm (FM) News **12.04 You and Yours**
12.00 (LW) News Headlines; Shipping Forecast
1.00 The World at One Round-up of the news headlines. Presented by Nick Clarke
1.30 Counterpoint Third heat of the music quiz
2.00 The Archers (r)
2.15 Afternoon Play: Contemplating Adultery Michael Butt's drama based on the book by Lotte and Joseph Hamburger. A respectable married Victorian translator conducts a passionate postal relationship with a raffish German prince
3.00 Money Box Live: 0870-010 0444 News from the world of personal finance
3.30 Tales from the Village Joel Kibazo explores the traditions that shape Africa (1/5) (r)
3.45 This Sceptred Isle Anna Massey narrates part six of the history of Britain (r)
4.00 The Food Programme Derek Cooper investigates stronger-tasting meats (r)
4.30 Turning World with Jenni Murray and guests
5.00 PM Presented by Clare English
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 I'm Sorry I Haven't a Desert Island Celebrities including Stephen Fry, Neil Kinnock, Germaine Greer, Jack Dee, Jim Broadbent and Judi Dench choose favourite moments from *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue*
7.00 The Archers
7.15 Front Row Mark Lawson looks at the fictional alter egos of American writers (r)
7.45 Lady Susan by Jane Austen. Wealthy widow Lady Susan Vernon decides to visit her brother-in-law. Broadcast earlier as part of *Woman's Hour* (r)
8.00 Shopping Heaven, Shopping Hell Tony Thorne delves into the social significance of shopping
8.30 In Business New series. Microsoft's top thinker Nathan Myhrvold maps out the future of computing for Peter Day
9.00 Nature: Insight Howard Stableford explores death and ageing in the natural world
9.30 Start the Week (r)
10.00 The World Tonight with Robin Lustig
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Nana Juliet Stevenson reads part six of Emile Zola's tale
11.00 Radio 4 Appeal An appeal on behalf of the Island Trust, which provides sailing opportunities for disadvantaged young people (r)
11.02 Late Night on 4: Espedair Street by Iain Banks. Paul Gambaccini presents the story behind the rise and fall of a 1970s band (1/4) (r)
11.30 (FM) At the Foot of the Mountain The composer Anthony Payne recalls the controversy surrounding his completion of Elgar's third symphony (r)
11.30 (LW) Today in Parliament
12.00am News **12.30 The Late Book: Last Resort** Kate Harper reads part one of Alison Lurie's novel about a couple coming to terms with illness
12.48 Shipping Forecast **1.00 As World Service**

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. **RADIO 2.** FM 88.0-90.2. **RADIO 3.** FM 90.2-92.4. **RADIO 4.** FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. **RADIO 5 LIVE.** MW 693, 909. **WORLD SERVICE.** MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). **CLASSIC FM.** FM 100-102. **VIRGIN RADIO.** FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. **TALK RADIO.** MW 1053, 1089. **Television and radio listings compiled by Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.**

Nice photography, shame about the plot

Watching a Stephen Poliakoff drama is getting like listening to an intelligent drunk at a party. He has some fascinating ideas. He constantly confronts you and pulls you up short. He has urgent propositions about "things that really matter". And he blithely mixes brilliant insights with clichés so crass you want to pour the contents of the ice bucket over his head.

Poliakoff is an undead survivor of a radical past, still determined to see the world through committed, irony-free, pre-Postmodernist eyes. This ought to be refreshing, but the results can be dire, as in the preposterous *The Tribe*. **Shooting the Past** (Sunday, BBC2) is a rather more complex curate's egg.

The central theme — the rich cultural meaning of a photographic archive — the heart-stopping power of still images, each one an amulet into a lost world of human experience — is wonderful. At the heart of the first episode, head librarian Marilyn Truman (Lindsay Duncan) uses pictures collated from different sections of a threatened collection to trace the story of a Jewish girl in Nazi Berlin.

The idea that Truman's deputy Oswald (Timothy Spall) would spend hours sifting through thousands of images in case this Holocaust survivor happened to have been snapped at the Elephant and Castle decades later is fairly ludicrous. That he should recognise her as a dishevelled old woman when the last known image showed her as a young girl is even more so. But that seemed tolerable. The example was symbolic of the priceless realities latent in such archives. It was very moving, intensified by Lindsay Duncan's air of restrained passion.

Much has been made in the press of the irony that the BBC had to hire back pictures for the production from a priceless archive that the Corporation itself off-loaded at a knockdown price. This might seem to prove Poliakoff's vision of a philistine, accountancy-driven corporate culture discarding our inheritance. The real irony is that it doesn't.





Paul Hoggart

Poliakoff's American executives are cardboard ruthless capitalists who live by ruthless schedules, shouting ruthless things into their ruthless mobiles. They propose to sell off a few valuable pictures and discard the bulk of the collection. The gorgeous interior of the library building, which Poliakoff chose to film at Ham House, is to be ripped out for conversion into a 21st-century business school. Through an unlikely contrivance, which hasn't been fully explained yet, all of this is to happen at a few days' notice. The central thrust of a valid argument was constantly undermined by this childishly implausible plot.

Of course, the BBC's archive was not lost. It was sold on more than once at vastly mounting profits, precisely because grasping American businessmen knew it had huge commercial, as well as historic, value. There were terrific performances from Lindsay Duncan and Timothy Spall as her scruffy, Bolshie, manipulative deputy, but these issues are not straightforward, and Poliakoff does us no favours by converting them into crudely stereotyped oppositions.

Bill Bryson doesn't hold with us Brits undervaluing our cultural heritage. For an American to prefer, in some respects at least, the drizzly British lifestyle to his native variety is an oddity that puts him in a very privileged position with British readers.

He can be as rude as he likes, once he has comforted us with the assurance that basically he thinks we're just great. He did right at the beginning of **Notes From A Small Island** (ITV, Sunday), a series recreating the wanderings of his book. Unfortunately he hasn't yet got round to being rude.

I have always greatly enjoyed Bryson's books on language, but his travel writing has never equalled the wonderful *The Lost Continent*, in which he retraced his childhood journeys through *America's obscure backwaters*. He is a mild, gentle soul, quizzical and soft-spoken, which is great as long as he is noticing the oddities of things. When his observations are merely commonplace, however, it all seems horribly bland.

Last night he took us to London, still "the greatest city in the world" apparently. The black cabs are "without question the finest in the world", he told us reassuringly. We went for a ride with Stephen Fry, who owns a black cab, and went for tea with some salt-of-the-earth cabbies.

Fry drives a cab "for anonymity" and because "it is a lot quicker". The explanation of this second point became curiously vague and waffly, presumably to avoid any suggestion that Fry makes improper use of the bus lanes.

Then Bryson whipped us off to Liverpool, "once an industrial powerhouse", no less, though now sadly *depopulated as all those salt-of-*the-earth comedians inflict themselves on everyone else. Still, it has kept its "bulldog spirit". Here we met Alexei Sayle, who also managed to avoid saying anything interesting about the city, except that the accent stopped abruptly at the city boundary. By the end I was yearning for a hearty slug of acid. Bryson is much funnier when he's being rude.

Sayle popped up again in **A History of Alternative Comedy** (BBC2, Sunday), hosted by Angus Deayton. We were treated to amusing "before they were famous" film of all the big names, including Sayle himself with improbably long hair. Nobody seemed able to agree what "alternative comedy" is (or was), except that it wasn't racist or sexist like the traditional stuff and Jo Brand said people who didn't like it were "unintelligent" and "mediocre". Thus does an anti-institutional trend become an *institution*.

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (34966)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (89343)
9.00 Kilroy (T) (8738121)
9.45 The Vanessa Show (T) (5101091)
10.55 News; Weather (T) (7077965)
11.00 Real Rooms (7087362)
11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (7057121)
11.55 News; Weather (T) (1280817)
12.00pm Call My Bluff (74362)
12.30 Battersea Dogs' Home (40166)
1.00 One O'Clock News (T) (82430)
1.30 Regional News; Weather (86761121)
1.40 Neighbours The land war affects Lou's health (T) (65458237)
2.05 Ironside A 10-year-old girl is the Chief's best hope of saving the family name when a rich socialite loses her jewels in a bag snatch incident (r) (7734411)
2.55 Going for a Song (8636966)
3.20 The Weather Show (T) (2067817)
3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (3873986) **3.45** The Littlest Pet Shop (9143169) **3.55** Bodger and Badger (8560850) **4.10** Pocket Dragon Adventures (5559430) **4.20** Rugrats (6010633) **4.35** Misery Guts (1793053) **5.00** Newsround (5530782) **5.10** Blue Peter (6670237)
5.35 Neighbours (r) (T) (592169)
6.00 Six O'Clock News; Weather (T) (121)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (701)
7.00 This Is Your Life Michael Aspel surprises another unsuspecting guest with the big red book (T) (9898)
7.30 Watchdog Healthcheck Includes a look at why Scandinavians live longer than other Europeans (T) (985)
8.00 EastEnders Ruth makes a shocking discovery (T) (8546)



George Cole stars as the sometimes awkward grandfather Brian (8.30pm)

8.30 CHOICE **Dad** New series of the domestic sitcom. With George Cole, Kevin McNally and Toby Ross-Bryant (T) (7053)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather (T) (9879)
9.30 Paddington Green Jackie considers expensive plastic surgery to complete her sex-change (T) (89782)
10.00 Panorama Neville Lawrence, father of murder victim Stephen, questions the Metropolitan Police Force's commitment to tackling racist crime (T) (340188)
10.45 Breach of Conduct (1994) Premiere. A woman has an affair with her military official husband's boss, who later kidnaps her. *Thriller*, starring Peter Coyote and Courtney Thorne-Smith. Directed by Tim Matheson (T) (767695)
12.15am Billy Two Hats (1973) Bizarre western, focusing on the friendship between an elderly Scottish outlaw and a young half-breed Indian. Gregory Peck and Desi Arnaz Jnr star. Directed by Ted Kotcheff (277928)
1.45 Weather *(8235164)*
1.50 BBC News 24 (75129218)

BBC2

7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Wiggly Park (1843099) **7.05** Teletubbies (2003256) **7.30** Yogi's Treasure Hunt (2396343) **7.50** Blue Peter (2307459) ***8.15** Taz-Mania (5705701)* **8.40** Polka Dot Shorts (8208091) **8.50** Romuald the Reindeer (8204275) **9.00** Space Ark (7131546) **9.10** Short Circuit (6540411) **9.30** Writing and Pictures (8313343) **9.45** Storytime (8318898) **10.00** Teletubbies (43053) **10.30** Words and Pictures (5977782) **10.45** Cats' Eyes (5972237) **11.00** Look and Read (1539546) **11.20** Zig Zag (6556527) **11.40** Landmarks (5761324) **12.05pm** History File (4580324) **12.30** Working Lunch (40148) **1.00** Romuald the Reindeer (73749966)
1.10 The Arts and Crafts Hour (2564508)
2.10 Sporting Greats New series. Eamonn Holmes talks to British sporting heroes, beginning with Stirling Moss (22285904)
2.40 News; Weather (T) (8028169)
2.45 Match of Their Day *New series. Garth* Crooks talks to former England manager Bobby Robson (T) (1120558)
3.25 News; Weather (T) (2057430)
3.30 The Car's the Star (r) (T) (8518459)
3.55 The Wiz (1978) Musical based on *The Wizard of Oz*. With Diana Ross. Directed by Sidney Lumet (16795459)
6.00 The Simpsons (r) (T) (546256)
6.20 The Simpsons (r) (T) (540072)
6.45 Hit, Miss or Maybe (r) (T) (675492)
7.00 Digital Planet How digital technology affects communities (2/3) (T) (9940)
7.30 Against the Grain Oliver Walston investigates levels of subsidy offered to British farmers (T) (527)
8.00 Beat Route Jools Holland's musical journey to ends in Dublin (T) (6188)
8.30 Food and Drink Antony Worrall Thompson cooks Thai curry (T) (5895)
9.00 Red Dwarf The crew are alarmed to receive an SOS call (T) (2891)
9.30 CHOICE **The League of Gentlemen** New comedy with Jeremy Dyson, Mark Gatiss, Steve Pemberton and Reece Shearsmith (T) (87324)
10.00 The Fast Show Comedy sketches, with Paul Whitehouse (r) (T) (73633)
10.30 Newsnight With Kirsty Wark (T) (294695)



A fictional defendant stands trial before a judge and jury (11.15pm)

11.15 CHOICE **Trial by Jury** New series. Real-life court officials try the fictional case of a man accused of murdering his wife (1/3) (T) (345053)
11.55 Weather *(534275)*
12.00 Despatch Box (26015)
12.30am BBC Learning Zone: Open University: A Different Way of Learning **1.00** The Science of Climate? **1.30** A Formidable Foe **2.00** Schools: Teaching Today **4.00** Languages: Get By in French **5.00** Business and Training: Skills for Work **5.45** Open University: Lifestyles, *Work and the Family* **6.35** Wood, Brass and Baboon Bones

HTV

5.30am ITN Morning News (70256)
6.00 GMTV (6860546)
9.25 Trisha (T) (3634817)
10.30 This Morning (T) (24201527)
12.15pm HTV News (T) (9428695)
12.30 ITN Lunchtime News (T) (94614)
1.00 Shortland Street Nick is beaten (84898)
1.30 Home and Away Tom and Vinnie fall out over Justine (T) (93985)
2.00 The Jerry Springer Show (T) (2968701)
2.45 Supermarket Sweep (T) (961879)
3.15 ITN News Headlines (T) (2055072)
3.20 HTV News (T) (2052985)
3.25 CITV: Mopatop's Shop (2042508) **3.35** Tots TV (8584430) **3.45** The Adventures of Captain Pugwash (8571966) **4.00** Oggy and the Cockroaches (6637643) **4.20** It's a Mystery (4637463) **4.45** Sabrina the Teenage Witch (1717633)
5.10 WEST: Painting Wild Wales Sketches and water- colours of rural beauty, *beginning in Snowdonia (T) (8200594)*
5.10 WALES: Moneyspinners Antiques and collectibles (1/6) (T) (8200594)
5.40 ITN Early Evening News (T) (190850)
6.00 Home and Away (r) (T) (465817)
6.25 WALES: Wales Tonight (T) (967492)
6.25 WEST: HTV Weather (704343)
6.30 The West Tonight (T) (169)
7.00 Wish You Were Here? Includes visits to Aspen, Colorado, and the new Turkish resort of Belek (T) (4966)
7.30 Coronation Street The hospital inquiry has an unexpected outcome (T) (463)
8.00 Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? Big-prize game show (T) (3614)



Carol Vorderman presents more design makeovers (8.30pm)

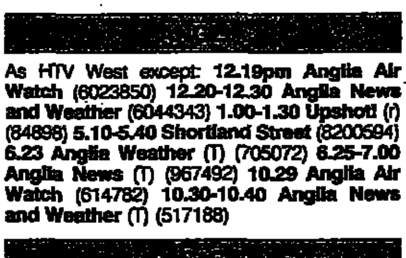
8.30 Carol Vorderman's Better Homes *The* design teams visit Thorpe-in-Balne near Doncaster, where they work their makeover magic on a derelict barn and an ordinary modern garden (T) (2121)
9.00 The Vice Hinckley's brutal treatment of Nikki brings dire repercussions. With Ken Stott (2/6) (T) (2459)
10.00 News at Ten; Weather (T) (77459)
10.30 HTV News and Weather *(T) (517188)*
10.40 Nash Bridges A computer hacker is blackmailed into helping crooks commit an audacious robbery (T) (302053)
11.40 Billy Bathgate (1991) A teenager escapes the poverty of Depression-era New York by hooking up with a notorious gangster. Starring Dustin Hoffman, Nicole Kidman and Bruce Willis. Directed by Robert Benton (T) (142324)
1.35am Football Extra (3361034)
2.35 World Football (r) (9608386)
3.05 House of Dracula (1945) A scientist encounters the Wolf Man and Frankenstein's monster. Starring John Carradine and Lon Chaney Jnr. Directed by Erle C Kenton (5945763)
4.15 Soundtrax (60502947)
4.25 ITV Nightscreen (3937183)
5.00 Coronation Street (r) (T) (11744)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:
12.20-12.30pm Central News; Weather (6044343)
1.00 High Road (84898)
1.30 The Jerry Springer Show (9073898)
2.15-2.45 Home and Away (962508)
3.20-3.25 Central News (2052985)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (8200594)
6.25-7.00 Central News; Weather (967492)
10.30-10.40 Central News; Weather (517188)
4.15am Central Jobfinder '99 (8251034)
5.20-5.30 Asian Eye (4388909)

As HTV West except:
12.15-12.27pm Westcountry News; Weather (9428695)
12.27-12.30 Illuminations (6052362)
1.00 High Road (84898)
1.30 Jerry Springer Show (9073898)
2.15-2.45 Home and Away (962508)
3.20-3.25 Westcountry News; Weather (2052985)
5.08 Birthday People (8659492)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (8200594)
6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (90643)
10.30-10.40 Westcountry News; Weather (517188)

As HTV West except:
12.15-12.30pm Meridian News; Weather (9428695)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (8200594)
6.00 Meridian Tonight (817)
6.30-7.00 Country Ways (169)
10.30-10.40 Meridian News; Weather (517188)
5.00-5.30am Freescreen (11744)



As HTV West except: **12.19pm Anglia Air Watch** (6023850) **12.20-12.30 Anglia News and Weather** (6044343) **1.00-1.30 Upshot!** (r) (84898) **5.10-5.40 Shortland Street** (8200594) **6.23 Anglia Weather** (T) (705072) **6.25-7.00 Anglia News** (T) (967492) **10.29 Anglia Air Watch** (614782) **10.30-10.40 Anglia News and Weather** (T) (517188)

Starts: **5.55am Sesame Street** (r) (45098492) ***7.00 The Big Breakfast*** *(47068546)* **9.00 Ysgolion:** The English Programme (98384343) **9.25 Schools at Work** (72503169) **9.30 Geography Junction** (89696546) **9.45 BookBox** (89684701) **10.00 Stage Two Science** (35827411) **10.15 Victorian Scots** (35840362) **10.30 Place and People** (17322985) **10.50 Stop, Look, Listen** (93005053) **11.00 Deuparth Gwaith** (24916072) **11.30 Here's One I Made Earlier** (T) (24917701) **12.00pm Right to Reply** (16649256) **12.30 Sesame Street** (38634430) **1.00 Planed Plant;** Ffwrdd a ni (54405904) **1.15 Ding Dong** (T) (54400459) **1.30 Classic Aircraft** (3/8) (T) (38633701) **2.00 Time Team** (T) (35773362) **3.00 The Lost Gardens of Heligan** (1/6) (r) (T) (64030071) **3.30 Hampton Court Palace** (56321237) **4.00 Fifteen-to-One** (T) (56333072) **4.30 The Montel Williams Show** (T) (56339256) ***5.00 Planed Plant*** (55585166) **5.30 Countdown** (T) (56320508) **6.00 Newyddion 6** (T) (69209898) **6.10 Heno** (T) (95901695) **7.00 Pobol y Cwm** (T) (79985922) **7.30 Newyddion** (T) (56330985) **8.00 Dudley** (T) (63680530) **8.30 Pwy Di Pwy?** (T) (74935427) **9.00 Y Byd Ar Bedwar** (T) (24903508) **9.30 Sgorio** (T) (19892527) **10.35 Cold Turkey** (67013701) **11.05 FILM: Kes** (T) (18022188) **1.10am Arthouse** (71241676) **2.10 Diwedd 4.00 Ysgolion:**

CHANNEL 4

5.30am Pink Panther (3842430)
5.50 Magic Roundabout (7914492)
5.55 Sesame Street (4850904)
7.00 The Big Breakfast (72053)
9.00 Schools: The English Programme (6547169) **9.25** Schools at Work (7362411) **9.30** Geography Junction (8308411) **9.45** Book Box (8303966) **10.00** Stage Two Science (9525904) **10.15** Victorian Scots (9515527) **10.30** Place and People (3287362) **10.50** Stop, Look, Listen (2799695) **11.00** Rat-A-Tat-Tat (6547879) **11.15** The Mix (6553430)
11.30 Here's One I Made Earlier (r) (T) (6782)
12.00 Sesame Street (67072)
12.30pm Bewitched (T) (92256)
1.00 Pet Rescue (r) (T) (75140)
1.30 Roots to Success (86778411)
1.45 Collectors' Lot (79133121)
1.50 You're in the Navy Now (1951) Wartime comedy following the antics of a *hapless crew on board a steam-powered* ship. Gary Cooper and Jane Greer star. Henry Hathaway directs (T) (61682053)
3.30 Hampton Court Palace (T) (275)
4.00 Fifteen-to-One (T) (782)
4.30 Countdown (T) (1787492)
4.55 Montel Williams (T) (4898850)
5.30 Pet Rescue (T) (546)
6.00 Dishes Dating show with a culinary theme (T) (459)
6.30 Hollyoaks Carol finally gets to go out with Finn (T) (411)
7.00 Channel 4 News; Weather (T) (410558)
7.50 Gilbert and Sullivan: The Very Models Animation about the famous musical collaboration (T) (609879)
8.00 Wild Tales Insight into the nocturnal savagery of the domestic cat (T) (6427)
9.00 CHOICE **Mayday** The 1994 sinking of the ferryboat *Estonia* (2/4) (T) (3701)



David Bradley stars in Ken Loach's northern drama (10pm)

10.00 Kes (1969) Classic British drama about a shy lad in a northern town who steals a baby kestrel and trains it as a pet. *Directed by Ken Loach and starring* David Bradley, Colin Welland and Lynne Perrie (T) (90218527)
12.05am Shooting Gallery New series. Showcase of short films, beginning with *Yellow*, directed by Simon Beaufoy and Bille Eltringham, *Anton and Minty*, by Alnoor Dewshi, and *A Hard Day's Work*, by Koen Mortier (8362218)
1.00 Dispatches *(r) (32386)*
2.00 Gigot (1962) A mute boarding house caretaker takes in an infirm prostitute and her child. Offbeat comedy, starring Jackie Gleeson and Katherine Kath. Directed by Gene Kelly (856928)
3.45 Eau De La Vie A woman regrets joining the management team of an up-market restaurant (64233928)
4.00 Schools: Top 1 (852170) **5.40** Place and People (3815386)

CHANNEL 5

6.00am 5 News and Sport Headlines, sport and business (7966701)
7.00 WideWorld Part two. The endangered reindeer of the Arctic (r) (T) (9061904)
7.30 Milkshake! (7500427)
7.35 Wimzie's House (r) (9792817)
8.00 Havakazoo (r) (1132508)
8.30 Dappledown Farm (r) (1131879)
9.00 Was It Good for You? (r) (2738091)
9.25 Russell Grant's Postcards (r) (4767546)
9.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (6584053)
10.20 Sunset Beach Vanessa considers adoption (T) (2182701)
11.10 Leeza (r) (2079527)
12.00pm 5 News at Noon (T) (1135695)
12.30 Family Affairs Jamie blames his mother for the divorce (r) (T) (9901324)
1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful Bridget learns Eric is her father (T) (9060275)
1.30 The Roseanne Show (9900695)
2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (6321695)
2.30 Good Afternoon (4520459)
3.30 Bachelor Knight (1947) A teenager sets her sights on an attractive older man — but he is more interested in her sister. Romantic comedy, starring Cary Grant and Myrna Loy. Directed by Irving Reis (T) (9697850)
5.20 Sunset Beach Shown earlier (r) (T); 5 News Update (6153879)
6.00 100 Per Cent Computer-generated quiz (5282904)
6.30 Family Affairs Dave thinks he's off the hook (T) (5273256)
7.00 5 News; Weather (T) (6325411)
7.30 Champions of the Wild The work of the kangaroo conservationists Marjorie Wilson and Lynette Campbell, champions of Australia's most famous animal, with contrasting outlooks on their crusade (T); 5 News Update (5262140)
8.00 Weather Front Katie Ledger, Paul Simons and Chris Thorncroft examine issues surrounding global weather systems (6341459)
8.30 Road Rages Reports on incidents of road rage in some rural areas, where drivers tear around the winding country lanes at dangerous speeds and farmers congest traffic with slow-moving loads (2/6) (T); 5 News Update (6320966)
9.00 Terror in the Family (TVM 1996) A wayward teenager's relationship with a delinquent tears her seemingly perfect family apart. Powerful domestic melodrama, with Hilary Swank, Joanna Kerns, Dan Lauria and Andy Kavovit. Directed by Gregory Goodell (T); 5 News Update (52206492)
10.40 Dr Fox's Chart Update The latest pop hits (1751643)
10.45 Zandy's Bride (1974) Romantic western adventure about the relationship between a cattle baron and his strong-willed mail-order bride. Gene Hackman and Liv *Ullman star. Directed by Jan Troell* (83261643)
12.35am Live and Dangerous Sporting magazine (89644299)
4.40 Prisoner: Cell Block H Myra is punished for scalding Gloria and the struggle to be Top Dog goes on, with the Freak temporarily on a high (3098676)
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (1005611)

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● **For further listings see Saturday's *Vision***

SKY ONE

7.00am Count Duckula (41891) **7.30** The Chris Evans Breakfast Show (19140) **8.30** Hollywood Squares (12546) **9.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (10445) **10.00** The Oprah Winfrey Show (17140) **11.00** Guilty! (37904) **12.00pm** Jenny Jones (20053) **1.00** Mad About You (91332) **1.30** Jeopardy (40817) **2.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (85430) **3.00** Jenny Jones (28121) **4.00** Guilty! (47256) **5.00** Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (3879) **6.00** Married — With Children (7701) **6.30** Friends (8053) **7.00** The Simpsons (4508) **7.30** The Simpsons (4237) **8.00** Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (65140) **9.00** First Wave (85904) **10.00** South Park (17091) **10.30** Seinfeld (93411) **11.00** Friends (48985) **11.30** Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (87782) **12.30am** Highlander: The Series (61812) **1.30** Long Play (5031876)

SKY BOX OFFICE

Sky's pay-per-view movie channels. To view any film telephone 0990 800888
SKY BOX OFFICE 1 (Transponder 28)
Volcano (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 2 (Transponder 60)
Excess Baggage (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 3 (Transponder 59)
Starship Troopers (1997)
George of the Jungle (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 4 (Transponder 58)
Crash (1996)

FILMFOUR

6.00pm Short Attention Span Cinema (7107492) **6.35** P'Tang Yang Kipperbang (1982) (5647817) **8.00 Circle of Friends** (1995) (7312140) **10.00 Beautiful Thing** (1995) (9748053) **12.00am Gregory's Girl** (1980) (3498657) **1.35 The Driver** (1978) (1715541) **3.10 Metal Skin** (1994) (9472522) **5.05 Zero de Conduite** (1933) (1589251) **6.00** Close

SKY PREMIER

6.00am I'll Get By (1950) (84817) **8.00 We the Jury** (1997) (84324) **10.00 Napoleon and Samantha** (1972) (42904) **12.00pm Stormchaser: Revenge of the Twister** (1996) (87625) **2.00 We the Jury** (1997) (15964) **3.30** Barry Norman's Film Night (1527) **4.00 Napoleon and Samantha** (1972) (6053) **6.00 Stormchaser: Revenge of the Twister** (1996) (57121) **8.00 Everyone Says I Love You** (1996) (69966) **10.00 Money Train** (1995) (666169) **11.50 The Star Maker** (1995) (788140) **1.45am Girl 6** (1996) (217559) ***3.35 Rough Magic*** (1995) (82312102)

SKY MOVIEMAX

7.00am Femmes Fatales: Meryl Streep (34817) **7.30** Movie Magic: The Transformer (8668695) **8.15** Action Heroes: Harrison Ford (2818850) **9.00 Amore!** (1993) (37166) **11.00 Little Bigfoot** (1995) (64362) **1.00pm** Femmes Fatales: Meryl Streep (33188) **1.30** Movie Magic: The Transformer (8448343) **2.15** Action Heroes: Harrison Ford (3997695) **3.00 Amore!** (1993) (98898) **5.00 Little Bigfoot** (1995) (99695) **7.00 Heart Full of Rain** (1997) (14053) **9.00 Contagious** (1997) (80695) **11.00 Born Bad** (1997) (893411) **12.35am Trigger Happy** (1996) (985102) **2.10 Defenders: The Payback** (1997) (437170) **3.50 Rikki and Pete** (1988) (406580)

SKY CINEMA

4.00pm Blood on the Moon (1948) *(8054508)* ***6.00 In Name Only*** *(1939)* (7425121) **8.00 Hullabaloo Over Georgie and Bonnie's Pictures** (1978) (7437986) **10.00 The Europeans** (1979) (7491850) **11.35 The Pope of Greenwich Village** (1984) (2105237) **1.35am Quintet** (1979) (6323367) **3.35 Three Coins in the Fountain** (1954) (60892980)

TNT

9.00pm Ivanhoe (1952) (40178430) **11.00 The Walking Stick** (1970) *(21378256)* **1.00am Where the Spies Are** (1965) (21329960) **3.00 Ivanhoe** (1952) (42633788) **5.00** Close

SKY SPORTS 1

7.00am Football Special **8.30** Racing News **9.00** Aerobics Oz Style **9.30** World Sport Special **10.00** Spanish Football **12.00pm** Aerobics Oz Style **12.30** What a Weekend **1.00** Football Special **2.30** Spanish Football **4.30** V-Max **5.00** Max Power **6.00** Sports Centre **6.30** What a Weekend **7.00** Football League Review **8.00** Monday Night Football Special **9.30** Total Sport **10.00** Sports Centre **10.15** You're On Sky Sports! **10.45** Football League Review **11.45** Sports Centre **12.00am** You're On Sky Sports! **12.30** Monday Night Football Special **2.00** Football League Review **3.00** Sports Centre **3.15** Close

SKY SPORTS 2

7.00am Aerobics Oz Style **7.30** Live International Cricket **11.00** Athletics: Road Race of the Month **11.30** US Golf: Mercedes Championship **1.30pm** What a Weekend **2.00** International Cricket **5.00** Football League Review **6.00** World Windsurfing **6.30** V-Max **7.00** International Cricket **10.00** US Golf: Mercedes Championship **12.00am** World Motor Sport **3.00** Sports Centre **3.15** Close

SKY SPORTS 3

12.00pm NFL: American Football **5.30** Total Sport **6.00** Fish TV **7.00** US Golf: *Mercedes Championship* **9.00** Sumo Wrestling **10.00** Dickie Davies' Sporting Heroes **11.00** Golden Age of Racing: A to Z of Motor Sport **11.30** Close

EUROSPORT

7.30am Rally **8.00** Speed Skating **9.00** Alpine Skiing **10.00** Cross-Country Skiing **11.00** Rally **11.30** Car On Ice **12.00pm** Ski-Jumping **1.00** Alpine Skiing **2.00** Nordic Combined Skiing **3.30** Biathlon **5.00** Ski-Jumping **6.00** Ten-Pin Bowling **7.00** Extreme Sports **8.00** Martial Arts **9.30** Rally **10.00** Football: Eurogoals **11.30** Boxing **12.00am** Rally **12.30** Close

UK GOLD

7.00am Crossroads **7.30** Neighbours **7.55** EastEnders **8.30** The Bill **9.00** The Bill **9.30** The House of Eliott **10.30** Angels **11.00** Dallas **11.55** Neighbours **12.25pm** EastEnders **1.00** Juliet Bravo **2.00** Dallas ***2.55** The Bill **3.25** The Bill **3.55** EastEnders* **4.30** Angels **5.00** All Creatures Great and Small **6.00** Dynasty **7.00** May to December **7.40** It Ain't Half Hot, Mum **8.20** Yes, Minister **9.00** Tears Before Bedtime **10.05** Hamish Macbeth **11.10** Sports Anorak of the Year **11.40** The Bill **12.10am** The Bill **12.40** Spender **1.40** French and Saunders **2.10** The Onedin Line **3.00** Shopping with Screenshop

GRANADA PLUS

6.00am Within These Walls **7.00** On the Buses **7.30** The Fenn Street Gang **8.00** That's My Boy **8.30** Second Thoughts **9.00** Classic Coronation Street **9.30** Emmerdale Farm **10.00** thirtysomething **11.00** Hawaii Five-O **12.00pm** Classic Coronation Street **12.30** Emmerdale Farm **1.00** Nearest and Dearest **1.30** Watching **2.00** thirtysomething **3.00** The Love Boat **4.00** The Saint **5.00** Hawaii Five-O **6.00** Emmerdale Farm **6.30** Classic Coronation Street **7.00** Mission: Impossible **8.00** The Love Boat **9.00** Classic Coronation Street **9.30** The Brian Conley Show **10.00** Jokers Wild **10.30** Hogan's Heroes **11.00** Granada Men and Motors



Minnie Driver and Chris O'Donnell star in Pat O'Connor's romantic drama Circle of Friends (FilmFour, 8pm)

DISNEY CHANNEL

6.00am Bear in the Big Blue House **6.25** Classic Toons **6.35** Gummi Bears **7.00** Classic Toons **7.10** Aladdin **7.35** 101 Dalmatians **8.00** Goof Troop **8.25** Classic Toons **8.45** New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh **9.00** The Adventures of Spot **9.05** Animal Shelf **9.15** Pocket Dragons **9.30** Bear in the Big Blue House **9.55** The *Toothbrush Family* **10.00** Bite Size **10.10** Tots TV **10.30** The Big Garage **10.45** PB and J Otter **11.00** Sesame Street **12.00pm** The Adventures of Spot **12.05** Animal Shelf **12.15** Pocket Dragons **12.30** Bear in the Big Blue House **12.55** The Toothbrush Family **1.00** Bite Size **1.15** Tots TV **1.30** The Big Garage **1.45** PB and J Otter **2.00** Quack Pack **2.30** New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh **3.00** The Little Mermaid **3.30** Art Attack **4.00** 101 Dalmatians **4.30** Hercules: The TV Show **5.00** Recess **5.15** Pepper Ann **5.30** Smart Guy **6.00** Teen Angel **6.30** Boy Meets World **7.00** Honey I Shrunk the Kids: The TV Show **7.50** Classic Toons **8.00** **FILM: The Incredible Genie** (1997) **9.30** Home Improvement **10.00** Dinosaurs **10.30** The Wonder Years **11.00** Touched By An Angel **12.00am** Close

FOX KIDS NETWORK

6.00am Power Rangers Turbo **6.30** Power Rangers Turbo **7.00** Mortal Kombat **7.25** Oggy and the Cockroaches **7.30** Donkey Kong Country **8.00** Goosebumps **8.25** Sam and Max **8.35** Spiderman **9.00** X-Men **9.25** Fantastic Four **9.50** The Incredible Hulk ***10.15** Casper **10.30** Oggy and the* Cockroaches **10.55** The Mouse and the Monster **11.05** EekIStravaganza **11.30** Life with Louie **11.55** Home to Rent **12.05pm** Sam and Max **12.30** Donkey Kong Country **1.00** Mowgli: The New Adventures of Jungle Book **1.25** Ace Ventura **1.50** Spiderman **2.15** X-Men **2.40** Fantastic Four **3.05** The Incredible Hulk **3.30** Roy and Lisa's Big Ride **3.35** Mortal Kombat **4.00** Spiderman **4.25** Mowgli: The New Adventures of Jungle Book **4.50** Home to Rent **5.00** Goosebumps **5.25** Eerie, Indiana: The Other Dimension **5.50** Oggy and the Cockroaches **5.55** Donkey Kong Country **6.25** Sam and Max **6.50** EekIStravaganza **7.00** Close

NICKELODEON

6.00am Muppet Babies **6.30** Rocko's Modern Life **7.00** CatDog **7.30** Rugrats **8.00** The Wild Thornberrys **8.30** Arthur **9.00** Children's BBC **10.00** Wimzie's House **10.30** Babar **11.00** The Magic School Bus **11.30** PB Bear/Budgie the Little Helicopter/Animal Antics/Family Ness **12.00pm** Rugrats **12.30** *Blue's Clues* **1.00** Bananas in Pyjamas **1.30** Little Bear Stories **2.00** Clangers/King Rollo/Wombles/Bod **2.30** Children's BBC **3.00** Children's BBC **3.30** Pippi Longstocking **4.00** Hey Arnold! **4.30** Rugrats **5.00** Sister Sister **5.30** Kenan and Kel **6.00** Sabrina the Teenage Witch **6.30** Driven Crazy **7.00** Close

TROUBLE

7.00am USA High **8.00** Saved by the Bell: *The New Class* **8.30** *Hang Time* **9.00** Tempest! **10.00** Hollyoaks **10.30** Echo Point **11.00** Sweet Valley High **11.30** California Dreams **12.00pm** The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air **12.30** In the House **1.00** Tempest! **2.00** Hollyoaks **2.30** Echo Point **3.00** Ready or Not **3.30** City Guys **4.00** The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air **4.30** In the House **5.00** Saved by the Bell: The New Class **5.30** Sweet Valley High **6.00** Hang Time **6.30** Movies, Games and Videos **7.00** USA High

BRAVO

8.00pm The A-Team **9.00** L.A.P.D **9.30** Cops **10.00** Scary Sex **10.30** Erotic Series **11.00 FILM: Jack's Back** (1988) **1.00am** Sex Bytes **1.30** Scary Sex **2.00** Extreme Championship Wrestling **2.30** Cops **3.00 FILM: Confessions from the David Galaxy Affair** (1979) **5.00** L.A.P.D **5.30** Bushido **6.00** Close

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

7.00pm Clueless **7.30** Desmond's **8.00** Roseanne **8.30** Newsradio **9.00** Cybill **9.30** Vic Reeves Big Night Out **10.00** Frasier **10.30** Cheers **11.00** Seinfeld **11.30** The Larry Sanders Show **12.00am** Late Night with David Letterman **1.00** Taxi **1.30** The Critic **2.00** Dr Katz **2.30** Soap **3.00** Tibs and Fibs **3.30** Nightstand **4.00** Close

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

SATELLITE: 8pm-MIDNIGHT ONLY

7.30am Bloomberg Information Television ***8.00** Sightings **9.00** Battlestar Galactica* **10.00** Quantum Leap **11.00** Dark Shadows **11.30** New Alfred Hitchcock **12.00pm** The Twilight Zone **12.30** The Twilight Zone **1.00** Tales of the Unexpected **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected **2.00** Amazing Stories **2.30** *Mysteries, Magic and Miracles* **3.00** Battlestar Galactica **4.00** The Incredible Hulk **5.00** Sightings **6.00** Time Trax **7.00** Quantum Leap **8.00** Sightings **9.00** PSI Factor: Chronicles of the Paranormal **10.00 FILM: Automatic** (1994) **11.45** Sci-Focus **12.00am** *PSI Factor: Chronicles of the Paranormal* **1.00 FILM: Pirhana II: The Spawning** (1982) **2.50** Sci-Focus **3.00** The Twilight Zone **3.30** Dark Shadows **4.00** Close

HOME & LEISURE

6.00am Today's Gourmet **6.30** Graham Kerr **7.00** Craftwise **7.30** The Painted House **8.00** Wedding Story **8.30** A Baby Story **9.00** Simply Painting **9.30** Garden Rescue **10.00** Garden Doctors **10.30** Cookabout with Greg and Max **11.00** Two's Country — Get Stuck In **11.30** Rex Hunt's Fishing Adventures **12.00pm** Australia's Strangest Home Improvements **12.30** Doing It Up **1.00** Our House **1.30** Hometime **2.00** Wood Wizard **2.30** Home Again with Bob Vila **3.00** The Old House with Steve and Norm **3.30** Go Fishing

DISCOVERY

4.00pm Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures **4.30** Walker's World **5.00** Flightline **5.30** History's Turning Points **6.00** Animal Doctor **6.30** Hunters **7.30** Beyond 2000 **8.00** Twisted Tales **8.30** The Supernatural **9.00** Storm Force **10.00** Century of Discovery **11.00** Air Power **12.00am** Fire **1.00** History's Turning Points **1.30** Flightline **2.00** Close

ANIMAL PLANET

12.00pm Animal X **12.30** Ocean Wilds **1.00** Nature Watch with Julian Pettifer **1.30** Australia Wild **2.00** It's A Vet's Life **2.30** Human/Nature **3.30** Harry's Practice **4.00** Jack Hanna's Zoo Life **4.30** Animal Doctor **5.00** Pet Rescue **5.30** Australia Wild **6.00** The New Adventures of Black Beauty **6.30** Lassie **7.00** Rediscovery of the World: Cuba **8.00** Animal Doctor **8.30** Going Wild with Jeff Corwin: Baja **9.00** Wild at Heart **9.30** Emergency Vets **10.00** Man-Eating Tigers **11.00** Breed All About It **11.30** Emergency Vets **12.00am** Close

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

7.00pm The Last Frog **7.30** Fire and Thunder **8.00** The Great Bison Chase **9.00** India in Focus: The Eclipse Chasers **10.00** Extreme Earth. Mountains of Fire **11.00** On the Edge. Survival on the Ice **12.00am** On the Edge. Wall Crawler

HISTORY

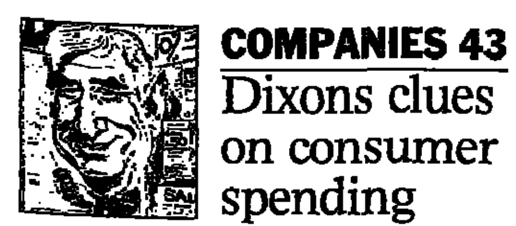
4.00pm The World at War: Banzai **5.00** Rockets: The Vengeance Weapon **6.00** The *Great Empire: Rome — The Republic of* Rome **7.00** Fabulous Fortunes: Dynasties — Old Blood **7.30** Giants of Sport: The Second War Years — 1940-1945

LIVING

6.00am Tiny and Crew **6.20** Philbert the Frog **6.30** Johnson and Friends **6.45** Tiny Tales **6.50** Polka Dot Shorts **7.00** Practical Parenting **7.05** Professor Bubble **7.30** Caillou **7.35** Bug Alert **7.55** Practical Parenting **8.00** Barney and Friends **8.30** Tiny Tales **8.35** Tiny and Crew **8.50** Practical Parenting **9.00** Diet Show **9.30** The Roseanne Show **10.00** The Jerry Springer Show **10.50** Maury Povich **11.40** Brookside **12.10pm** Animal Rescue **12.40** Rescue 911 **1.10** Special Babies **1.40** Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction **2.10** LA Law **3.10** Living Room **4.00** Michael Cole **4.50** Rolanda **5.40** Ready, Steady, Cook **6.15** The Jerry Springer Show **7.05** Rescue 911 **7.35** Animal Rescue **8.00** Murder Call **9.00** Liz: The Elizabeth Taylor Story **11.00** Sex Life Down Under **12.00am** Close

ZEE TV

5.00am Amar Katheyen **5.30** Music Time **6.00** Your Zindagi **6.30** Geet Gata Chal **7.00** Faith **7.30** Daily News **8.00** Ru-Ba-Ru **8.30** Salaab **9.00** Jaan **9.30** Mujhe Chaand Chahiye **10.00** Pal-Do-Pal **11.00** Jhat Pat Khana **11.30** Parampara **12.00pm FILM: *Hindi Movie: Amanush*** **3.00** Zee Bangla **3.30** Ikke Pe Ikka **4.00** Campus **4.30** Quiz Contest **5.00** Daastan **5.30** Chahat Aur Nafrat **6.00** Music Mag **6.30** Teacher **7.00** Ghar Jamai **7.30** Filmi Baatein **8.00** News Bulletin **8.30** Gumrah **9.00** KTC Sa Re Ga Ma **10.00** The Big Debate **12.00am** News Bulletin **12.30** Aap Ki Adalat **1.00** Zee Bangla **1.30** Raahat **2.00 FILM: Bengali Movie: Shakti** **4.30** Ebar Jombe Mov



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Dixons clues on consumer spending

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US CLIMB 45
Roger Bootle on market mass delusion



BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

MONDAY JANUARY 11 1999

Mirror Group and Trinity at odds after talks fail

By Raymond Snoddy
Media Editor

TRINITY, the UK's largest regional newspaper group, yesterday pulled out of merger talks with Mirror Group for a second time, amid rumours of disputes in the Mirror camp.

Trinity issued a curt statement saying that it was "withdrawing from merger talks with the Mirror Group with immediate effect". However, the move was last night being interpreted as a tactical withdrawal after the reopening of talks in November and negotiations that were in progress as recently as last week.

David Montgomery, the Mirror Group chief executive, yesterday said: "We are still interested in doing a deal, but only one that enhances shareholder value."

Trinity, whose papers include the *Belfast Telegraph*, the *Liverpool Post* and the *Western Mail*, is believed to have proposed an all-share deal that would have given Trinity shareholders 45 per cent of the enlarged group, to the Mirror's 55 per cent. However, Mirror directors are holding out for a 60-40 split in Mirror's favour. Ever since the start, early last year, of preliminary talks between the two companies, which were broken off at Easter, Trinity has insisted that its chief executive, Philip Graf, and not Mr Montgomery should run the enlarged group.

The two sides last night put forward irreconcilable accounts of the breakdown of talks. Trinity's decision to pull out was being attributed to a split between Mirror executive directors led by Mr Montgomery and non-executive directors led by Sir Victor Blank, the Mirror chairman. Mr Montgomery was being accused in print of having held talks with Morgan Stanley on a possible management buyout, something that was being vigorously denied last night.

The Mirror camp insists that its board is united on the principle of a merger with Trinity if the right terms can be obtained. The main issues in talks between the two last week are believed to have been price and the likely synergies between Trinity and Mirror Group.

Lasmo and Enterprise in merger talks

By Carl Mortished, International Business Editor

THE catastrophic fall in the price of crude oil has forced two former enemies, Enterprise Oil and Lasmo, into discussions which could lead to a £2.3 billion merger.

Lasmo, which fought off Enterprise in a bitterly contested bid battle in 1994, confirmed it was in talks with the former aggressor but this time with a view to a friendly merger.

A spokesman for Lasmo yesterday said that the talks were about "a merger of equals" and were just one of a series of initiatives aimed at improving Lasmos's competitive position, "one of which is an evaluation of a possible merger with Enterprise". He emphasised that no agreement had been reached.

News of the talks is likely to put both companies into play. BG, the gas pipeline and exploration company, is known to harbour ambitions to increase its exploration activity.

Sources close to the companies say a meeting took place before Christmas between Sir Graham Hearne, the chairman of Enterprise, and Rudolph Agnew, his opposite number at Lasmo. The meeting was followed by talks between their advisers, including Morgan Stanley and Rothschilds for Enterprise and Schroders acting for Lasmo.

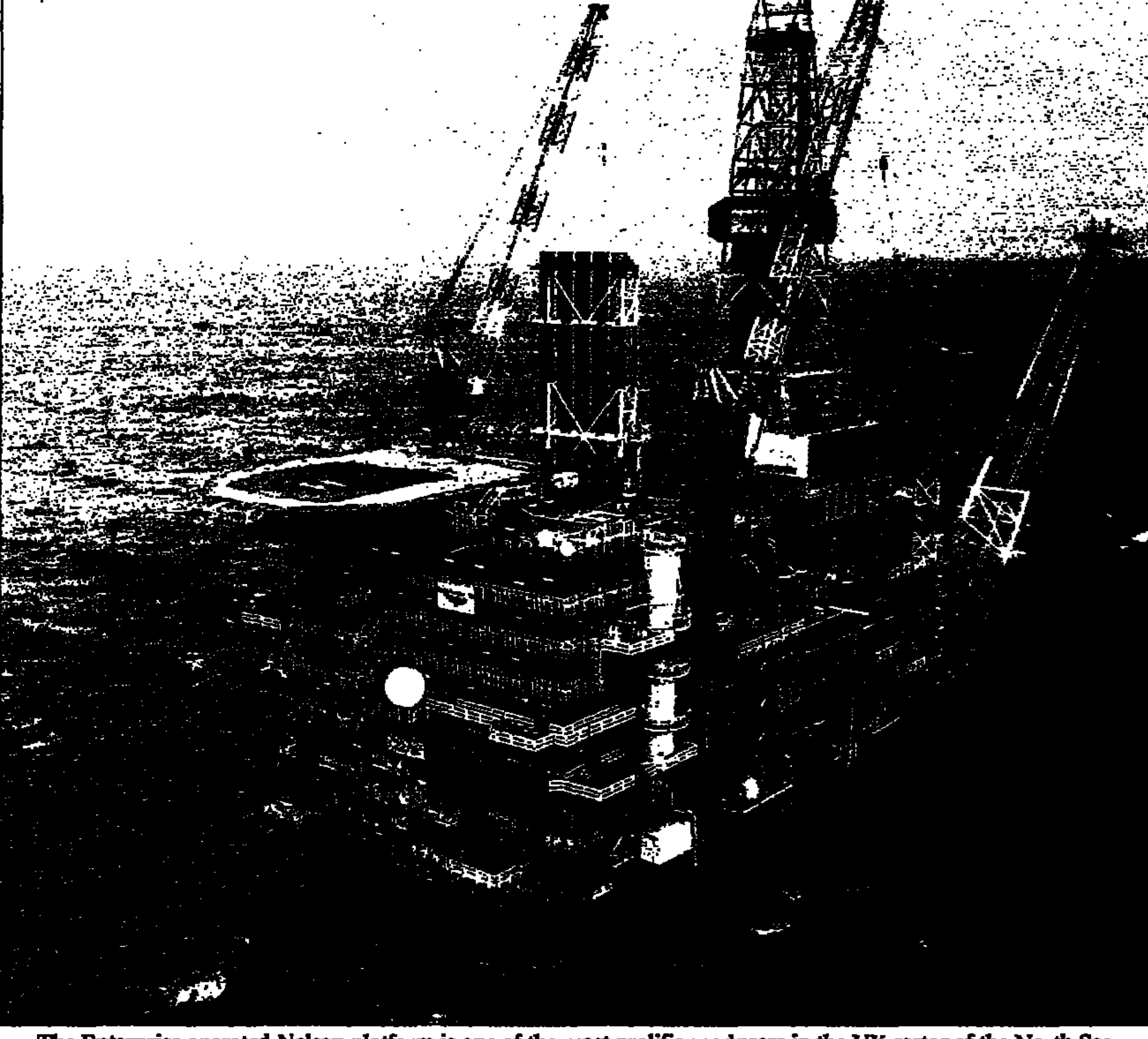
However, the thorny question of who runs the combined group is far from settled. Tensions between the two were already in evidence, with neither side prepared to admit that it had initiated talks.

The initiative is likely to have come from Enterprise Oil, where it is believed Sir Graham has never given up on his ambition to merge the two companies after the bungled takeover bid. Shareholders demanded that he take a back seat and relinquish the chief executive's role, which was given to Pierre Juengels.

Mr Juengels is unlikely to survive a merger, having failed to achieve much success in exploration. Morevoer, he has implicitly criticised Lasmo's strategy by pouring scorn on E&P prospects in areas of political risk. Lasmo's chief executive, Joe Darby, is expected to insist on the chief executive's job.

Key to the success of the talks will be agreement on cost-cutting. Lasmo has cut 200 jobs at head office and Enterprise is under pressure to quit its expensive Trafalgar Square offices. Both have been ejected from the FTSE 100 as their share price crumbled because of the low oil price.

Lasmo, valued at £900 million on Friday, is worth half its value at the time of the Enterprise bid. The latter's shares have suffered a similar fall.



The Enterprise-operated Nelson platform is one of the most prolific producers in the UK sector of the North Sea

Savills set to face takeover bid from investor

By Martin Waller

SAVILLS, the quoted property consultant, is being lined up for a takeover bid from First Pacific Davies, its 20 per cent shareholder, if the company's share price fails to improve by the spring.

FPD paid 160p a share for the stake in late 1997, since when a series of British property companies, including Jones Lang Wootton, Healey & Baker and Richard Ellis, have been bought outright by big American concerns.

The purchase included a standstill agreement precluding FPD, based in Hong Kong, from buying more shares in the company until April. But Savills shares have plunged since then to below £1, although they rose 18p to 115p last week as the market scented a possible deal.

Savills will announce interim profits on Tuesday and the market is looking for a £1 million increase at the pre-tax level to about £5 million, a precursor to full-year profits the market expects to come in at about £12 million. But this puts the shares on a forward price-earnings multiple of little more than seven, in a property sector that contains only Savills and one other significant independent, DTZ Debenham Thorpe.

Aubrey Adams, managing director of Savills, said no approaches had been made for the company. "Even if there had been, we couldn't possibly comment on it."

But it is known that FPD, which has two directors on the Savills board, is seriously considering a full bid. One observer commented: "If the share price really does stay at rock bottom levels, FPD would see the chance of buying at rather less than the 160p it initially paid."

The two companies use the FPD Savills brand on a range of ventures around the world, but there is a gap in their coverage in the US. With Savills shares at their current low levels there is no chance of growing by acquisition thereby issuing fresh equity.

Richard Ellis, part of the US-based Insignia Group, yesterday confirmed that it is in talks with St Quintin to create a group with a combined turnover of £60 million.

SB to barter for Cuba meningitis vaccine

By Paul Durman
and Peter Harrison

SMITHKLINE BEECHAM is resorting to barter to secure rights to a promising meningitis vaccine developed in Cuba.

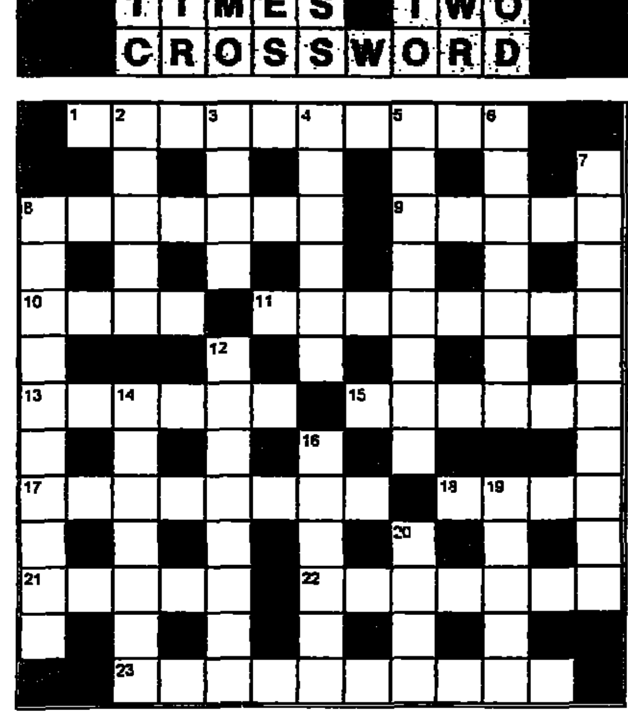
Negotiations with Cuba's Finlay Institute have been complicated by American legislation that prohibits trade with Cuba. SB's Belgian-based vaccines business is a subsidiary of the pharmaceutical group's American arm, which has raised the possibility that the vaccine might fall foul of the Helms-Burton Act.

Recent industry rumours suggested that SB was planning to take legal action against the US Government on the grounds that its operation of the Cuban embargo was denying an important medicine to patients.

However, Rick Koenig, an SB spokesman, said the company is making progress in its discussions with the US. He said SB is "not even close" to embarking on legal action.

SB struck an agreement in principle with the Finlay Institute late last year. To address US concerns about hard currency trade with Cuba, SB provisionally agreed that payments to Finlay while the vaccine moves through development will be in the form of goods such as food and medicine.

Any royalty payments on the vaccine, which could take another four or five years to bring to market, will be paid half in cash and half in goods. The vaccine is already available in Cuba and some other South American countries.



No 1611

ACROSS
1 Bashful: embarrassed (10)
8 Reinforce; a pillow (7)
9 Cut with sweeping stroke (5)
10 Make fast: constrain (4)
11 Thin wire, fibre (8)
13 Landsman (at sea) (6)
15 Interwoven twigs; an acacia (6)
17 Sickening reverse (4,4)
18 Wickedness (4)
21 Stigma (5)
22 Fatuousness (7)
23 See 7 *(D H Lawrence)* (10)

DOWN
2 Trojan War over her abduction (5)
3 Ship's officer; cornering of king (4)
4 (Nine-gallon) cask (6)
5 One shipwrecked (8)
6 Local variant of language (7)
7 Constance —, loved Mellors the 23 (10)
8 Foaming tub (6,4)
12 In the exact words (8)
14 Request; stage in bridge (7)
16 King's jester *(Hamlet)* (6)
19 A gauzy fabric (5)
20 Green (stone); poor horse (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1610
ACROSS: 1 Planck 4 Tonne 8 Total 9 Apparel 10 Handful 11 Dart 12 Tip 14 Tease 15 Amber 18 Tap 20 Sumo 22 Retired 24 Ruffian 25 Clove 26 Point 27 Ceased
DOWN: 1 Pot shot 2 Antenna 3 Cold feet 4 Tape 5 Nerva 6 Eclat 7 Vault 13 Pastiche 16 Burnous 17 Redhead 19 Prank 20 Syrup 21 Mufti 23 Sift

SOLUTION TO NEW YEAR'S DAY TIMES TWO JUMBO
ACROSS: 1 Les Misérables 8 Social science 15 Canadians 16 Boomerang 17 Assault 18 Is what gets lost in translation 19 Gecko 21 Readership 22 Handicraft 24 Subsist 25 Sparse 27 Three Wise Men 31 Inalienable 33 Angelus 35 Echelon 37 Iodine 38 Cor anglais 39 Redeposit 41 Gammoning 43 Standpoint 44 Foible 47 Ortolan 48 Theresa 49 Temperature 50 Therapeutics 53 Strewn 55 Typists 57 Storm doors 59 Sinologues 61 Spoil 64 To put all one's eggs in one basket 66 Arabian 67 Salamanca 68 Avoidance 69 Religiousness 70 Mischievously
DOWN: 1 Lacking 2 Sandwich board 3 India 4 Exaggerating 5 Alsatians 6 La Belle Dame sans Merci 7 Spouses 8 Specific 9 Crafty 10 Aggravate 11 Soapsud 12 Instances 13 Nautical miles 14 Extinct 20 Opinion poll 23 The Last of the Mohicans 24 Sailing boat 26 Shanghaied 28 Wields 29 Nonetheless 30 Egg-and-dart 32 Brought 34 Surinam 36 Hippocampus 40 Fiancé 42 Mother-of-pearl 45 Bluestockings 46 Testosterone 51 Admitting 52 Tortoises 54 Neuropath 56 Dilemmas 57 Set fair 58 Orlando 60 Organum 62 Lottery 63 Felloe 65 Audio

BAA debates floating its property arm

By Carl Mortished

BAA, the airport group, is considering floating Lynton, its property development arm, as part of a strategic review of its core businesses.

A BAA spokesman confirmed that a demerger of Lynton was under consideration for financial reasons. He said: "There is a real debate on this. There is a lot of value locked up in Lynton and the question is: Can we finance the development of the property business within the group?"

Speculation that BAA, headed by Sir John Egan, would hive off its property assets has grown since the group expanded its off-airport activities into factory outlets through a venture with McArthur Glen. Lynton has assets exceeding £500 million and last year made operating profits of £31 million, a relatively small contribution to BAA's £480 million profit, despite its big asset base.

BAA took over Lynton for £222 million in 1988 near the property market's peak, and the business's off-airport assets became a liability as the market fell.

A demerger is likely to be led by Gordon Edington, who joined BAA with Lynton and is still chairman of the property business. For a while, he headed BAA's international businesses.



Egan: strategic review

City fears job losses over euro opt-out

By Alasdair Murray
Economics Correspondent

THE City is fearful that the arrival of the single currency will result in sweeping job losses in the Square Mile, a survey published today shows.

The KPMG euro survey, taken just ahead of last week's euro launch, also confirms that City businesses are overwhelmingly in favour of British entry into the single currency.

The survey finds that 40 per cent of City companies expect job losses because of Britain's euro opt-out, while nearly 50 per cent believe London will be less attractive to overseas investors as a result. This contrasts with just 8 per cent of companies that believe the City's non-euro status will result in increased jobs and about a fifth of businesses that anticipate the City will still be able to attract extra business.

City firms are also increasingly warming to UK membership of the single currency, with 51 per cent more in favour of joining than six months ago.

Party time for lawyers

By Chris Ayres

MISBEHAVIOUR at office Christmas parties is expected to lead to record levels of litigation by employees this year.

The warning by Osborne Clarke, the solicitors, came as news emerged of a senior Army officer who had been suspended after he was accused of groping female colleagues at a Christmas party in Aldershot, Hampshire. The military police are now investigating Lieutenant Colonel Mike Godkin, a 43-year-old father-of-two, who was accused of "behaviour unbecoming of that rank".

Osborne Clarke estimates that up to 1,000 assault and sexual harassment cases related to Christmas and new year office parties will be launched throughout the country this month. Eversheds, another law firm, also said it was working on "a raft of cases". The awards given in such cases usually range from £5,000 to £15,000.

Up-and-coming cases include a male factory trainee suing a group of female factory workers for pulling off his trousers as part a drunken jape.

Nick Moore, head of employment at Osborne Clarke, said: "There is now a much greater awareness among employees of the potential for claims."

